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THE
LUTHERAN REFORMATION.

CHAPTER XVII.

Recapitulation—Diet of Augsburg—Confession of Augsburg—Proceedings respecting the Confession—Luther—Concluding Transactions and Recess of the Diet.

THE diet of Augsburg forms an era in the history of the reformation: and the proceedings of that assembly are next to engage our attention.

The blessed reformation had now been thirteen years in progress. Its origin, its preservation, its advancement, had all been alike beyond human expectation. It had seemed throughout to maintain a precarious existence, dependent on the will of its adversaries. And scarcely ever before had those adversaries shewn themselves deficient either in vigour or sagacity: but, in their treatment of the reformation in its earlier stages, a remarkable want of those qualities had been manifested. Their disunion among themselves, and the distractions arising to the emperor Charles V. from the rivalry existing between him

and Francis I, king of France, and to the popes from their jealousy of both these potentates ; together with the alarms excited by the threatening advances of the Turks : these, sometimes conjointly and sometimes separately, proved the means of sheltering the reformation, till it gradually acquired that root and establishment which no human power could subvert. But, in fact, it was the work of God ; and the greatest and best of his works for the children of men in these latter ages ; and he would not suffer “ the gates of hell to prevail against it.” He caused all these agents and events, and whatever others may be pointed out as having contributed to the grand result, to fulfil his purposes. The friends and promoters of the great cause were made to feel constantly their dependence upon him ; but the requisite help was never withheld in the time of need.

Amidst the divisions and disorders (as they were esteemed,) to which the proceedings of Luther and his coadjutors, in exposing the errors and corruptions of the church of Rome, had given occasion, the great remedy to which the hopes of all those who wished to combine some reformation of abuses, with the preservation of the sort of order which had previously subsisted in the Christian world, were directed, was the convocation of a general council. Much as such assemblies had hitherto disappointed the expectations entertained from them, the repetition of the experiment was the only resource which suggested itself. The reformers, whether they looked for any very satisfactory result from the deliberations of a council, or not, yet acted prudently in appealing to one : the princes and people, in general, felt the necessity of something being done, which only such an assembly was thought properly authorized to do : the court of Rome alone stood cordially opposed to the measure ; and they could not with decency openly reject the numerous and repeated applications made, from the very highest quarters, for the calling of a council, under such cir-

cumstances as might induce all to refer the points in dispute to its decision.

Clement VII, however, who now filled the papal chair, viewed the convocation of a council with a degree of aversion and dread surpassing that usually manifested by those who had occupied his situation. The proceedings of the councils of Pisa and Constance, which had deposed the popes Benedict XIII, Gregory XII, and John XXIII, excited his fears; and the circumstances of his own birth and elevation (neither of which was free from reproach,) confirmed his terrors.

The emperor, after spending several months with him in the same palace at Bologna, was fully instructed in the views of his holiness, and at his late coronation had sworn "to be, with all his powers and resources, the perpetual defender of the pontifical dignity, and of the church of Rome:" though we must conclude, that he neither felt himself inclined if he had been able, nor able if he had been inclined, to carry matters with that high hand against the adherents of the reformation, which the pope would have wished. As however a council was so much dreaded by Clement, that he would offer none but upon terms which he knew would be rejected by the protestants, the effect of a diet of the empire was once more to be tried; and this, as we have seen, had been summoned to meet at Augsburg on the eighth of April, 1530.

This celebrated diet was the *sixth*, before which the subject of the religious differences in Germany had been brought. The first was that of Worms in 1521, which proscribed Luther as an excommunicated heretic. The second, that of Nuremberg in 1522-3, distinguished by the presentation of the "hundred grievances." The decree of this diet virtually abrogated the edict of Worms. The third, again held at Nuremberg, 1523-4, where the members resolved to observe the edict of Worms "as far as they could"

The fourth, convoked at Augsburg, 1525, and afterwards adjourned to Spire, 1526. Here a general council was demanded, and all left at liberty till it should be held. The fifth, that of Spire again, in 1529, which produced the protest whence the *protestants* derived their name.

The diet of Augsburg, summoned for the eighth of April, had been postponed to the first of May: and it was not opened till the arrival of the emperor in the middle of June.

Before entering upon the business of the diet, it may be useful further to recall to the reader's memory the principal leaders on both sides. On that of the papists there were, besides the emperor Charles V. and his brother Ferdinand, the pope's legate Campeggio, Joachim elector of Brandenburg, George duke of Saxony, and William, of Bavaria. Henry duke of Brunswick was on the same side: but he was at this time comparatively moderate; though he afterwards became one of the most violent. The same was to a considerable degree the case with the cardinal archbishop and elector of Mentz, brother to Joachim of Brandenburg, and the first prince of the empire. The name of the archbishop and elector of Cologne also occurs; but he seems to have taken no active part in this diet. Perhaps he was already well disposed towards reformation; and we shall ultimately find him a confessor and sufferer in the cause of protestantism. To these are to be added two papal nuncios, Cheregato and Pimpinello; and the cardinal archbishop of Salzburg. The bishop of Augsburg also was one of this party, though he acted on more than one occasion a remarkable part, more favourable to the protestants than any of the rest.

On the side of the protestants were John, surnamed the Constant, elector of Saxony, and his son John Frederic; Philip landgrave of Hesse; George marquis (not *elector*) of Brandenburg; Ernest and Francis dukes of Lunenburg; Wolfgang prince of Anhalt;

Albert count Mansfeldt; and count Philip of Hanover: to which are to be added the deputies of several imperial cities.

Each party also brought with them some of their principal divines; to whose assistance recourse might be had as circumstances should require. Faber, Eckius, Cochläus, and de Wimpina were among those of the papal party: Melancthon, Justus Jonas, Spalatinus, Schnepfius, and Agricola, were the chief on the part of protestants. Bucer, Hedio, and Capito also attended from Strasburg: but they leaned more to Zwingle than to Luther. The elector of Saxony took Luther with him as far as Coburg: but, perhaps fearing for his safety, he left him in the castle of that city, as a place at once of security and convenience, where he might be informed of what passed, and give his counsel if required.

The emperor had been met at Inspruck, by several of the electors and princes of the empire. Accompanied by these personages, his brother Ferdinand, Campeggio, the ambassadors of France, England, and Portugal, and met by all the other princes and grandees at some distance from the city, he entered Augsburg on the evening of the fifteenth of June. On the approach of the princes who came out of the city to meet him, the emperor and his brother dismounted, and received them in the most gracious manner: but the legate and cardinals sat still on their mules. The legate also, to draw the more attention to his official character and authority, seized this opportunity of pronouncing his benediction, which the emperor and the princes of that party humbly knelt down to receive; while the elector of Saxony and his associates continued standing. In the cathedral some contest, it appears, arose concerning the benediction. The cardinal of Salzburg came forward to pronounce it: but he was indignantly repelled by the legate, who chose again to perform that service himself.

The day of the emperor's entry into Augsburg had been, probably by design, deferred to the eve of the festival of Corpus Christi, when a solemn procession of the host took place. Late in the evening the emperor sent for the protestant princes, and signified to them his pleasure that they should attend him in the procession of the ensuing day. Having anticipated the demand made upon them, the princes promptly replied, that it was contrary to their consciences to do it. The marquis of Brandenburg was their spokesman; and he, having received a sharp answer from Ferdinand, placed his hand on his neck, and made this memorable declaration: "Rather would I instantly kneel down, and in the emperor's presence submit my neck to the executioner, than prove unfaithful to God, and receive or sanction antichristian error." The emperor merely observed, with mildness and address, "That there was no intention to take any man's life."—The next morning the demand was renewed, and the discussion concerning it was protracted so long as to delay the procession some hours beyond the appointed time. Here again the marquis of Brandenburg declared, "In the present cause, which pertains to God, I am compelled by an immutable divine command to resist all impositions of this kind, whatever may be the consequence: since it is written, 'We ought to obey God rather than man.' For the confession, therefore, of the doctrine which I know to be the word of Christ, and eternal truth, I decline no danger, not even that of life itself, which I hear is threatened by some."

All efforts to prevail with the protestant princes having proved fruitless, the procession was celebrated without them, but with great pomp. The popish historian observes, "This was the triumph of Christ at Augsburg, in the sight of the Lutherans!" The pious Seckendorf more justly rejoins: "It was the triumph indeed of the pope and his party, not of Christ; but so conducted that the real honour of the

day, in the sight of God and his saints, belonged to those princes and others, few in number, and of comparatively small power, whom neither the dread majesty of Cæsar, nor all the dangers that threatened them, could prevail with to do any thing contrary to their consciences."

The elector of Saxony was next required, by virtue of his office of marshal, to carry the sword before the emperor to the mass. While it was thought that this would prove a still more odious imposition than the former, the elector's divines and advisers viewed the matter in a different light. The case, they said, varied materially from that of the procession. There their master had no official duty to perform: but here he was called to discharge a civil office—"to render service to the emperor, not worship to God." Having therefore premised an explanation of his views, he complied with the emperor's demand, signifying his dissent from the religious service by abstaining from bowing to the host. As the late instance proved how firm the protestants could be where principle required it, their present conduct shewed their readiness to comply where conscience would permit.

On another subject, some degree of contention had commenced even before the emperor's arrival at Augsburg. The chaplains of the protestant princes, both in the places they passed through, and after they arrived at Augsburg, preached frequently in the churches. Though they abstained as much as might be from controversy, and applied themselves directly to the edification of the people, this proceeding naturally gave umbrage to their enemies: and the emperor accordingly, before he moved from Inspruck, signified his pleasure that the practice should cease. This had been foreseen, and the course to be, in consequence, adopted had been made the subject of previous deliberation among the protestants. The divines decided in favour of submission to the emperor, and Luther fully concurred with them. The princes,

however, seem to have been more tenacious; and, notwithstanding the emperor's letters, the preaching was not discontinued till some days after his arrival; and not even then by an absolute surrender, but only by compromise—the emperor engaging to impose silence on the divines of the popish as well as of the protestant party, and to appoint such preachers, exclusively, as all might hear without offence to their consciences.

It may deserve to be recorded, at least for the purpose of shewing what were the habits of the times, that the day before the diet opened (being Sunday,) the emperor received the holy sacrament, and spent two hours of the evening in retired devotion, “besides the hour which he thus employed every morning.” Concerning the good elector of Saxony we are told, “After hearing the opening speech in the diet, he called together the friends of the reformation, and exhorted them to an intrepid assertion of the cause of God and religion; and the next morning, having ordered all his counsellors and attendants to retire, he poured forth most fervent supplications to God for the success of the great business in hand: and then, for the confirmation of his own mind, committed to writing some things which Dolzig (one of his counsellors,) and Melancthon perused with admiration.”

On the twentieth of June, the diet was opened with a long speech in the emperor's name, read by Frederic count Palatine. It turned principally upon two points. The first was the necessity of adopting vigorous measures against the Turks, who, under their sultan Solyman, had taken Belgrade, conquered Rhodes, besieged Vienna, and, in short, threatened all Europe. The other point was, the ‘unhappy religious differences’ in Germany; on which the princes and states were invited, though cautiously and coldly, to unfold their sentiments. It was agreed on all hands that the subject of religion should first come under consideration. On the twenty-second of June, therefore, the emperor gave notice to the

elector of Saxony and his friends, that at the next session, to be held on the twenty-fourth, they should present a summary of their faith, and an account of the reformation of abuses which they demanded. According to the terms of the summons and the emperor's letters, the one party, as well as the other, should have been required to present the articles of their faith upon the points in question: the protestants however alone, as being the innovators, were thus called upon, and the Romanists were saved the trouble and peril of presenting a direct object of examination to their opponents.

The elector and his friends were prepared to meet the demand made upon them. 'The Confession,' or, as it was at that time called, 'The Apology,' had been drawn up for some time. Luther had furnished the materials, particularly in certain articles, which from the place where they were presented to the elector were called the Articles of Torgau: but it received its form from the clear and eloquent pen of Melancthon; who was revising and retouching it, to the very last moment, with a minute anxiety which Luther thought superfluous.

On the day appointed, business commenced at so late an hour, and so much time was occupied with preliminary and little more than mere formal proceedings, as to furnish the emperor, no doubt designedly, with a plausible pretext for refusing to hear the Confession read: for, as it was the object of the protestants to give it the utmost publicity, so it was the aim of their adversaries to have it passed over with as little notice as possible.

At length however the stage was open, and the elector arose, attended by the several princes his friends; and, standing near the throne, he, by Pontanus his ex-chancellor, (a man of eminent piety, eloquence, and experience in affairs,) entreated to have the "Apology," which they had prepared, read, "that their real doctrines, and the observances

of their religion, might be known, and that the great misapprehensions, and the consequent odium, under which they lay, might be removed." With this request the emperor refused to comply; ordering the papers to be delivered to him, and promising to hear them the next day in private. To this the princes earnestly and strenuously objected, and pressed for permission to read them in the full diet—urging that the case was one which concerned their reputation, their fortunes, their lives, and even the salvation of their souls. At all events, they pleaded to be allowed to retain their papers in their own hands till they could be heard.¹—At length he agreed that they should retain them, and that he would hear them the next day; not, however, in the full diet, but in the hall, which served the purpose of a chapel, in the episcopal palace where he resided.

On Saturday, therefore, the twenty-fifth of June, the princes and dignitaries of the empire, with the representatives of such as were personally absent, assembled—none but official characters being admitted; and the protestant princes, and the deputies of the imperial cities of Nuremberg and Reutlingen, with Christian Bayer, the elector's chancellor, and Pontanus presented themselves—Bayer bearing a German, and Pontanus a Latin copy of the Confession. The emperor wished the Latin copy to be read: but the elector, proposing his request in terms which would have made the rejection of it unpopular, said, "As we are in Germany, I trust your majesty will allow us to speak German;" and the emperor assented. Bayer therefore read deliberately, and in so audible a voice as to be heard beyond the hall, in the court below, the whole of the Confession and its appendages—which occupied him two hours. When he had finished, both the copies were offered to the imperial secretary, but the emperor himself

¹ They too well knew that, if once previously examined in private, their papers would never be heard in public.

took the Latin one, and then courteously dismissed the assembly, causing it to be signified to the parties that he would take the subject into his most serious consideration.

This public reading of a document which asserted all the great principles of protestantism, and openly impugned the errors, doctrinal and practical, of the church of Rome, was to Luther a matter of great triumph and devout exultation. "Our adversaries," he writes to the elector, "think they have succeeded to admiration, in procuring the preaching to be stopped by an imperial prohibition: but, poor men! they do not perceive that, by the exhibition of a written confession to the emperor, more is done to make known and propagate our doctrine, than perhaps ten preachers could have effected. Islebius, (Agricola,) it is true, and the other divines are silenced: but forth come the elector of Saxony and the other princes and lords, with a written confession of faith in their hands, and preach with all possible freedom before his imperial majesty and the whole empire, in the view of all the world, so that they are forced to hear, and can say nothing against it!... Truly Christ is not silent in the diet!... Thus is that accomplished which is written, 'The word of God is not bound.' No: if it is prohibited in pulpits, it shall be heard in the palaces of kings."

If the public reading of the Confession were a subject of rejoicing to Luther, much more might the wide extended publication of it, which soon followed, be so. The printing of the Confession, or of any thing relating to it, was indeed for the present forbidden; but it was soon translated into numerous languages, and manuscript copies were dispersed in all the courts of Europe.¹

But, in fact, the immediate effects of the Confession were such as to justify a large portion of the

¹ It was translated into Italian for the pope, who was but a poor Latinist! Melch. Adam.

joy and triumph which Luther expressed on the occasion. Mosheim says, "The princes heard it with the deepest attention and recollection of mind: it confirmed some in the principles they had embraced; surprised others; and many, who before this time had little or no idea of the religious sentiments of Luther, were now not only convinced of their innocence, but moreover delighted with their purity and simplicity." Father Paul also observes, "It is not to be omitted that cardinal Matthew Langi, archbishop of Salzburg, told every one," after hearing the Confession, "that the reformation of the mass was becoming, the liberty of meats proper, and the demand to be disburdened of so many commandments of men, just: but that a poor monk should reform all was not to be endured."

But of another prelate, Christopher von Stadion, bishop of Augsburg, we have a much more promising account. After hearing the Confession, he is related to have said, "What has been recited is true; pure truth; we cannot deny it." And some time after, when he was among the commissioners appointed to bring about, if possible, an agreement between the parties, the following occurrence took place. "After much dispute, the bishop of Augsburg, the diocesan of the place, and a man of prudence and firmness, rose, and in a pious and solemn discourse entreated the princes and prelates to guard, with anxious care, against determining any thing contrary to the word of God, and inconsistent with rectitude and justice. It was too true," he said, "and manifest to all men, that the Lutherans, in what they maintained, had hitherto opposed no one article of the Christian faith: and, this being the case, it became all, who feared God and loved peace, earnestly and frequently to consider by what means the ancient tranquillity might be restored and preserved." On hearing him utter these sentiments, the archbishop of Salzburg demanded, "Whence came this sudden change, and

unexpected sanctity?—for he distinctly remembered,” he said, “to have heard from the prelate’s mouth other sentiments, and other feelings than these, concerning religion?” The bishop of Augsburg replied: “I do not deny that in the course of my life hitherto I have done many things worthy of censure, and contrary to piety: but present circumstances imperiously require of me to renounce ungodliness and the allurements of sin, and to commence a new life. And, not to dissemble what I think, perhaps your manner of living, my lord of Salzburg, is not much more religious, or more virtuous, than my own: and your proceedings are worse than mine, in proportion as you more obstinately and eagerly excuse your sins, palliate idolatrous abuses, and attempt to defend and uphold unholy doctrines: of all which impiety God forbid that I should make myself a partaker!” The elector of Brandenburg then warmly took up the question against Luther; and the bishop of Augsburg as warmly defended what he had advanced, affirming that the Lutherans assailed “not the catholic church, but only the abuses prevailing in the church of Rome; and that no one could deny that many gross and dangerous errors remained in that community.” The elector of Mentz was obliged at length to interfere, and terminate the discussion.¹

A few remarks may here be made on the Confession itself, which attracted so much attention, and produced such powerful effects at the time, and which became thenceforward the doctrinal standard of a large and respectable section of the Christian world. It is introduced by a prefatory address to the emperor, and is subscribed by seven princes and the representatives of two cities. It consists of twenty-one “chief Articles of Faith,” followed by seven others concerning the changes made by the reformation of abuses in the practice of the church: and it

¹ From Celestine—a Roman-catholic historian.

concludes with an "Epilogue," in which it is observed, that numerous other abuses might have been specified, but that, to avoid prolixity, and to promote conciliation, the writers had confined themselves to such as were essential. To most of the articles of faith are subjoined rejections of the opposite errors : so that each topic may be said to be explained both positively and negatively.

The general resemblance of the doctrine, and even of the language of the Confession, to that of the articles of our own church, must strike every attentive reader. But this is little more than what is common to all the confessions of faith composed at the period of the blessed reformation. Shades of difference might and would exist; but on all leading points the reformers were "of one heart and of one soul." "One Spirit" from God evidently rested in a large measure upon them, and "opened their eyes to behold the wondrous things of his word." The same blessed truths burst almost simultaneously upon their astonished and enraptured view; and the contrariety of the whole, to the system of darkness and delusion which had prevailed, stood discovered in such a manner, that they "could not but speak forth" to all the world the things which they had learned. Whatever may be said to the contrary, the doctrine of the reformation is, in the main, *one*: and the slight differences among the leading instruments in the work, and especially in the writings designed to exhibit the doctrines of the several churches, are not worthy to be named in comparison with the general harmony and agreement. And this is as true of the Confessions which may be supposed to have been most influenced by the tenets of Calvin, the Helvetian and the Gallican, for instance, as with respect to any others. It is delightful to trace this, and with it the sound and salutary doctrine, delivered in so devout and edifying a spirit, with which they are replete.

The grand stress of all is laid on the answer to the question, "How shall man be just with God?" and the doctrine taught is, that we are freely "justified by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;" and that our interest in this unspeakable blessing is received simply through faith; and "depends not on the condition of our worthiness, neither is bestowed on account of preceding works, nor for the worthiness of any works to follow"—though follow they assuredly will in every one who has any part or lot in the blessing. This is the great doctrine of the reformation; and not of the reformation only, but of the "holy catholic church;" the "*articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ*"—the mark of distinction between a standing and a falling church. It is the doctrine which, as Luther and his friends evermore so strikingly set forth, at once brings peace into the conscience, and holiness into the heart and life; gives liberty *in* the service of God, not, as some would insinuate, *from* that service: the doctrine which, being blessed by the Spirit of God, in the sixteenth century overthrew the gainful, but corrupt and oppressive system of austerities, indulgences, purgatory, and priestly domination, that had for ages been growing up, and supplanting true religion and righteousness in the world. It is the doctrine which persons unacquainted, or but imperfectly acquainted with the influence of the gospel on the hearts of men, are ever ready to think big with a thousand dangers, and with which therefore they are ever prone to tamper; but which has always been restored again, to the establishment of peace in men's consciences, and righteousness in their lives, in proportion as God has "poured his Spirit from on high" upon his church.

At the same time this doctrine is in the Confession guarded against abuse, and made altogether practical in its application. In fact, peace given to the conscience, on sure and solid grounds, is here most justly considered as one of the first requisites for

bringing men to the true and spiritual service of God. How contrary is this to the common opinion, that to be assured of pardon, and of having found favour with God, must make us careless of our conduct! The former, in contradistinction to the latter, is the doctrine of scripture, of fact, and of sound philosophy also.¹

Yet, further, the *spirit* in which the work is composed deserves to be noted. This is such as to make the perusal of it delightful to the pious mind. It is no mere cold, dry, doctrinal statement; a sacred unction overspreads it. It bears upon its very face, to be the production of men with whom religion is a matter of deep and serious feeling: it all has a direct reference to Christian experience and to practice; to give relief to distressed consciences, and to produce spiritual obedience. All its doctrines it delivers for the benefit of those who are burdened with the sense of sin: and it takes for granted that we have all need

¹ The Confession says: "Heretofore, when this consolation," arising from the true doctrine of justification, "was not proposed, many trembling consciences endeavoured to pacify themselves by works; some betook themselves to a monastic life, some to one species of works, some to another, by which they were to obtain remission of sins and justification. But there is no firm consolation, except this doctrine of the gospel; and this whole doctrine is provided and adapted for the conflicts of a conscience alarmed" by the sense of sin.

Again, it quotes the testimony of Gerson, chancellor of the university of Paris, (whom Mosheim calls "the most illustrious ornament" of the fifteenth century, and "the oracle" of the council of Constance,) "That many fell into despair, and some even committed suicide, because they found it impossible satisfactorily to observe the traditions of the church, and had heard of no consolation from grace, and the righteousness of faith." To this add the following striking passage from Luther on the Galatians; "What I here say from St. Paul's words, I have learned by experience, my own and that of others in the monastery. I have seen many, who, with the utmost diligence and scrupulosity, have omitted nothing which might pacify conscience; have worn hair-cloth, fasted, prayed, afflicted and exhausted their bodies by various severities, so that, even if they had been made of iron, they must at length have been destroyed; yet the more they laboured, the more fearful they became. And, especially as the hour of death drew nigh, they were so full of trepidation, that I have seen many murderers, condemned to die for their crimes, meet death with more confidence than these persons who had lived so strictly."

to be so burdened; and that true religion generally begins in such a sense of guilt and danger. And with great propriety does it address itself to persons thus affected; to the "poor in spirit," the "contrite in heart," the "weary and heavy-laden:" for Christianity itself is designed for such characters. No others will understand it, value it, and make the right use of it.

The point on which the Confession appears to be most defective, is the work of the Holy Spirit; particularly that part of it which relates to "the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will," and not only "working with us when we have" that good will.¹ I notice this especially for the purpose of remarking, that the fashionable way of speaking of the grace of God 'assisting our endeavours,' and of branding every thing beyond this as fanatical, is a mere cover for practically excluding the grace of God altogether. When we speak of 'assisting a man's endeavours,' it implies that he is already willing and active himself: but is this the state of fallen man with respect to the service of God, previously to the influence of divine grace upon his mind? Prevenient grace must go before, and "work in us to will," or assisting grace will find nothing with which to coöperate.—The language now frequently in use also implies, that any thing beyond *assisting* grace must be a *compulsory* influence. But it has been justly observed, that there is much said in scripture, and in all our best divines, of an influence *inclining* the heart, though not *forcing* it;² all which is thus overlooked.—Nothing can be further from my intention than to admit, that the Confession of Augsburg countenances any such system as this: it has merely omitted to guard against it so clearly and distinctly as our own articles have done.

We now turn to the proceedings adopted after the

¹ Church Art. x.
VOL. II.

² "Incline our hearts to keep this law," &c.

reading of the Confession.—The legate, with the other papal emissaries, had been anxious that the protestants should not at all be heard, but that a decision should at once be pronounced against their tenets, as already condemned by Leo X; and that force should be resorted to to put them down: in short, that the edict of Worms should be strictly executed. As this could not be carried, the legate absented himself from the reading of the Confession, that he might not even seem to compromise the rights of the church, by admitting to a hearing that which she had condemned. The emperor however desired his advice respecting it, and he accordingly read it in private, with the divines who accompanied him; and thought, says Father Paul, “that a censure of it ought to be published in his name:” yet, “foreseeing that this would give occasion to greater tumults, and saying plainly that ‘the difference for the most part seemed verbal, and it imported not much whether men spake after one manner or another;’ and that it was not reasonable that the apostolic see should take part in the disputations of the schools; he refused to have his name used in these contentions.” On the whole however he concluded, “that, the doctrine of the Lutherans having been read, in order to remove prejudice,” that is, to efface the impression which had been made in its favour, “a confutation of it should be read likewise—but not published, for fear of opening a way to disputations; and that means should be used, by proposing favours and threats, to prevent the protestants from going further.” The emperor’s counsellors concurring in this opinion of the legate, the Confession was delivered into the hands of the popish divines, particularly Faber and Eckius, that they might prepare a refutation of it. And on this work they employed between five and six weeks.

During this period Campeggio’s plan of “favours and threats,” particularly the latter, began to be put

in practice. The elector of Saxony had never yet received formal investiture of his dignities and dominions from the emperor. He now applied for this confirmation of his rights, but was surprised by a refusal. "The emperor would not grant it, unless the elector would return to the catholic church!" In the same terms he refused to ratify the marriage of the elector's pious and excellent son, John Frederic, with Sibylla of Cleves. This was the more mean and cruel, as, in order to break off a match between his own sister (subsequently queen of Portugal,) and this young prince, Charles had promised to afford every countenance in his power to any other suitable alliance. In like manner, he threatened to deprive the marquis of Brandenburg of the guardianship of his nephew. To the landgrave of Hesse, on the other hand, he held out the hope of the restoration of Ulric of Würtemberg, who had been expelled from his dukedom—an object which the landgrave had much at heart. But such "threats and favours" were as unavailing as they deserved to be; and no one of the protestant princes was induced by them to swerve in the least from the principles which they had in common avowed.

At length the popish divines presented their Refutation of the Confession. "The conclusion of it," says Sleidan, "was severe and hard; no less than the ban of the empire being threatened to those that obeyed not." Such was probably the proposal of the divines: but "the princes," Du Pin observes, "were of opinion, that all the biting expressions, which the divines could not help bringing in, should be taken out:" and thus qualified, it was read, on the third of August, in a full assembly of the states, the emperor premising that it had his approbation, and should receive his support.

Melancthon speaks of the Refutation as "so puerile that it produced much mutual congratulation" among the protestants. "All good and wise

men," he says, "seem to be in better spirits since they heard it." After it had been read, it was acknowledged that some abuses existed, of which the emperor would endeavour to procure reformation. He trusted therefore that the protestants would return into the bosom of the church, and submit themselves. The elector of Saxony answered for himself and his friends, That they would do any thing for peace which they could do with a safe conscience; and, if convicted of any error by scriptural authority, they would readily renounce it. But he desired a copy of the Refutation, that they might consider it at leisure, and shew on what points it was not satisfactory to them; which would be in conformity with the fair and candid discussion to which they had been invited. This however was refused. Two days after, a copy was offered, merely for their private perusal, and on condition that no transcript should be made, and that it should not be communicated to any other persons, as the emperor would *have no further debate*, but required them *to submit to his decision*. On such conditions they declined to receive it: and the night following, the landgrave suddenly quitted Augsburg, without taking leave; which much displeased the emperor. Being a discerning, and at the same time a somewhat hasty man, he had seen enough to convince him that no good was to be expected at Augsburg, and therefore he did not wish to be longer detained there.

Thus all prospect of the friendly discussion of differences, and much more of pacification, seemed to have vanished. None but the protestants had submitted their tenets to examination, and they had been met only by an angry "refutation," (as it was called,) and by demands of implicit submission, backed by threats in case of their refusal to comply. The elector of Mentz, however, and other princes, desirous of trying what further could be accomplished, undertook to act as mediators between the

parties. Their mediation however did not wear a very conciliatory aspect, when, in the very first conference which was held, one of their number permitted the declaration to escape him, That, if the elector of Saxony did not renounce and anathematize the new-fangled doctrine which he had embraced, the emperor would by force of arms deprive him of his dignities, his possessions, and his life. This outrageous sentence, which, it would naturally be suspected, did but betray counsels secretly cherished on that side, much disturbed the good elector; but he did not suffer himself to be in the least moved by it from his purpose. To the honour of those concerned it deserves also to be recorded, that, at this very period of danger and difficulty, four fresh cities, Kempton, Winsheim, Hailbrun, and Weissenberg, all of them of but moderate strength and resources, joined the protestant cause. All the attempts of the mediators proved, as might have been expected, ineffectual. The differences did not admit of compromise. Toleration could not be thought of by the church of Rome, or the unreserved submission demanded of them, by the protestants. The whole business was therefore referred back to the emperor at the end of the month, in the same state in which it had been found. "What will be the event," Melancthon here writes, "I cannot divine. Let us pray that God would incline the mind of the emperor to the preservation of peace, of which not only we, but all Germany now stands in the greatest need."

It will be gratifying to turn from this scene of hopeless controversy, to the employments of Luther during the same period. It has been observed, that he accompanied the elector on his journey to the diet as far as Coburg. He took up his abode at this place in April, and he continued there till the elector's return in October. He was to be here in a degree of concealment, and we might be sure that

to his active and ardent spirit this long-continued seclusion would often be irksome. He complains of the rare and tardy communications which he received from Augsburg: nor was he always well pleased with them when they arrived. We read also of bodily indisposition which he suffered, and of the temptations of Satan with which he was harassed. But his magnanimity, supported by an extraordinary spirit of faith and prayer, enabled him to triumph over all discouraging and anxious circumstances; to be the comforter of his conflicting, and often desponding friends; to carry on his assaults in a very efficient manner against the upholders of the reigning delusions; and to promote the edification of the church by pious and instructive writings. Even the gaiety of his spirit did not forsake him, and he could mingle amusement, both for himself and his friends, with his more serious occupations. He employed his leisure at Coburg, we are told, in "translating the Prophets, and composing a commentary on the Psalms; and, by way of relaxation, in rendering the fables of Æsop into German, or in writing humorous letters to his friends."

But particularly, a little before the emperor left Inspruck, on his way to Augsburg, Luther composed and published an address to the ecclesiastical members of the diet, well calculated to make the strong impression which it appears to have produced. He sent copies to the prince John Frederic at Augsburg, by whom they were forwarded to Dolzig, his father's ambassador to the emperor, with directions to him to put them into the hands of persons well-affected to their cause, in the imperial court. In this address, or "Admonition," after apologizing for the liberty he took in offering advice, he first pointed out how fruitless all harsh measures had hitherto proved. Even the opposite party, he observes, bore testimony to his doctrine, having *borrowed from him, and learned to preach in quite a different manner from what they had heretofore*

done. He urges the services which he must be confessed to have rendered, in checking the disorders of the fanatics, preventing sedition at Worms, and supporting the authority of the magistrates; in putting to rout the vendors of indulgences, upholding the rights of the bishops against the insolence of the monks, and removing many acknowledged abuses. The most specious charge against him was that of innovation. He repels it therefore, and indeed retorts it, with great spirit. Having enumerated various particulars, he exclaims, "The remainder of really ancient usages among you, usages sanctioned by the canons and the fathers of the church, may be comprised in a nutshell; while the world itself is filled with your novelties. One worships and invokes S. Ann, another S. Christopher, another S. George, S. Barbara, S. Sebastian, S. Catharine: in short, it is impossible to recount the new objects and new rites of worship that have been introduced, and the date and origin of most of which might be distinctly traced." He animadverts with severity on the sort of *sermons*, which had not only been heard in the churches, but, without number, published to the world, and which were of the very silliest character. Nothing was heard in them of Christ, nothing of faith: the very best resounded only with the invocation of saints and the worship of the virgin. His testimony upon the last of these topics is very striking. "I myself, as much as any others, paid to Mary what was due only to Christ. Him I regarded as an angry judge: Mary, as the fountain of grace, to whom all our hopes were to be directed, if we would not be left utterly to sink in despair!" The schoolmen, he affirms, "did nothing but propose paradoxes; their whole art was founded in a contempt of scripture." He declares before God, that he did not animadvert on these things for the sake of reproaching any persons, but with the sincere desire of their reformation. He then notices the

abuse of church censures, as the means of tyranny and extortion. He reprehends also the misapplication of the ecclesiastical funds, the scandals arising from the celibacy of the clergy, and the utter neglect of the duties of their office shewn by the bishops. He then earnestly exhorts the persons addressed to repentance and amendment. If no hope was to be entertained from them, he begs that they would not delay to take him off. "While living," he says, "I have been your plague, and dying I will be the death of you. God has stirred me up against you, as he did the prophet Hosea against his people, that I should be to you as a lion and a bear." He and his friends however sought no diminution of the rank and revenues of the prelates; it hurt them not at all that they were lords and princes; they were ready to obey their authority as far as conscience would permit; and they desired no provision to be made for themselves: God would take care of them in that respect. They only asked peace, and exemption from persecution: they had sought, and would seek nothing, but that the gospel might have free course.

This bold address of Luther's was publicly sold near the hotel of the elector of Saxony at Augsburg, and was read to the assembled Roman-catholic princes by the bishop of that city. Yet at the distance of a hundred and fifty years it so moved the wrath of Maimbourg, as to make him exclaim against the luke-warmness of the emperor, who, though he might be excused, in consideration of the safe-conduct he had granted, in dismissing Luther from Worms, ought certainly now "to have compelled the elector of Saxony to deliver him up at Augsburg."

Seckendorf will not venture to pronounce whether this composition of Luther's, and another to be noticed immediately, tended to promote or obstruct the desired result; though he inclines to the former conclusion: and he enumerates various distinguished

persons who heard this address of Luther's, and who became within a few years friends and patrons of the reformation: particularly Herman, archbishop of Cologne, Frederic, count, and soon after elector, Palatine, Joachim, son and successor of the elector of Brandenburg, Eric, duke of Brunswick, the dukes of Mecklenburg and Pomerania, and others, whose representatives only were present; not to mention counts, barons, knights, and free cities.

The other publication of Luther's, to which we have alluded, was a printed letter to the archbishop of Mentz, in which he admonishes him to be on his guard against the Italians; warns him from the second Psalm, and from the fatal issue which the persecution of the apostles entailed on its authors; conjures him to stand, like Gamaliel, between the protestants and their persecutors; and scruples not to tell him, that, while associated with the pope and his abettors, he stood involved with Satan himself.

But the private correspondence of the reformer will be still more interesting to us.

Writing to the elector, then waiting at Augsburg for the emperor's arrival, he consoles him, under all the trials he endured for the gospel's sake, among other considerations, by the following eulogy of the religious state of the electorate of Saxony. "Truly there are more numerous and more excellent pastors and teachers in your highness's dominions, than in any other country in the world. Our youth of both sexes grow up so well instructed in the holy scriptures and the catechism, that it affords me the most sensible pleasure to see children learn more, and enabled to believe and avow more, concerning God and Christ, than all the papal colleges, monasteries, and schools heretofore knew, or even yet know. These tender plants form a lovely paradise, planted by God himself in your highness's territories, which has not its equal in all the world beside. The children of God are protected and daily fed with the

bread of life in your dominions: the very reverse of which is the case in those of the popish princes. In those countries, however, there are many who look to the *sacred land*, under your highness's sway, with ardent affection and fervent prayers." He calls God to witness, that he wrote not thus to flatter his prince, but in sincerity and truth, lest Satan should deject and sadden his mind. "I know that subtle agent in part," he says, "and the artifices with which he often disturbs me. He is a gloomy and morose spirit, who reluctantly suffers any heart to enjoy peace."

Luther anticipated no favourable result from the discussions at Augsburg. "Certainly," he writes to Agricola, about the twentieth of June, (before the Confession had been read,) "Certainly you have to do, not with men, but with the very powers of darkness, well practised, and fully equipped; but, what comforts me, full also of rage—blinded by which they must needs at length run foul of the counsels of divine wisdom, like a ship upon a rock."

In a letter to Justus Jonas, of the same date, he says, "I exult in the gift of God, that our prince possesses so determined, and yet so calm a spirit. This makes me trust that my prayers for him are accepted in the kingdom of heaven." "Philip," he adds, that is Melancthon, "is harassed by his philosophy, and nothing else; for the cause rests with Him who sublimely pronounces, 'None shall pluck it out of my hand.' I would not wish it to be in our hands. Whatever hitherto I have been enabled to cast from myself upon him has prospered: so true is it, that 'God is our refuge and strength.' Who ever 'trusted in Him, and was forsaken?'"

Hearing of Melancthon's great anxiety and distress, he wrote to him, June 30, as follows:—"Grace and peace to you in Christ! My dear Philip, I am quite at a loss what to write to you: so much do the thoughts of your vain and sinful anxieties repel my

attempts, and convince me that I speak to the deaf. This is owing to your trusting to yourself alone, and having no confidence in me or in others. I will declare the truth. I have been in greater straits than ever you will come into. I hope and pray that no man, not even our enemies who now so rage against us, may be like me," or exposed to what I have been: "and yet in those distresses my heart has often been relieved by the words of a brother; those of Pomeranus, of Jonas, or of yourself, and others. Why then do you not, in your turn, listen to us? We speak not according to the flesh and the world, but according to God: and doubtless under the guidance of his Holy Spirit. Though we be worthless, I pray you, let not Him who speaks by us be esteemed unworthy of regard. If it be false that God gave his own Son for us, then let the devil, or let any one take my place: but, if he really did so, then what means our care, our anxiety, our sadness, our trepidation? As if he who gave his Son for us would not be with us in affairs of comparatively light moment! or as if Satan were stronger than he!—In private conflicts (if my conflicts with Satan are to be called private,) I am weak and you are strong. In public ones it is the very reverse. You despise your life, but tremble for our cause! On the contrary, with respect to the cause in which we are engaged, I am confident, and at my ease, being sure that it is righteous, and the cause of truth, and, in fact, of God and his Christ, which has no need to tremble at the guilt of sin, as I a poor imperfect Christian have. I feel myself therefore almost a secure spectator; and value not those fierce and threatening papists a rush. If we fall, Christ, the ruler of the world, will fall with us: and, if he falls, I choose rather to fall with Christ than stand with Cæsar.—Nor are you at Augsburg the only persons who uphold this cause. Believe me, I am faithfully with you in groans and prayers. I wish I might be personally present: for certainly the cause belongs

as much, and more, to me than to any of you. Nor did I take it up through any rashness, or from the desire either of glory or of gain; as the Spirit himself is witness, and as facts have declared, and will yet more widely declare. For Christ's sake therefore I beseech you, do not so neglect those divine promises and consolations, 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord; Wait for the Lord; be strong, and he shall comfort thy heart.' The Psalms and Gospels are full of such passages. 'Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.' Christ is the conqueror of the world. What then, do we fear a vanquished enemy as if he were the victor? Such a sentence would be worth fetching from Rome or Jerusalem, though we had to creep all the way upon our hands and knees for it. But plenty and familiarity make us hold things cheap. Faith is weak: but let us pray with the apostles, 'Lord, increase our faith!'—But I write in vain: since you, instructed by your philosophy, attempt to manage all these things by reason alone: you let reason lead you into folly, and vex yourself to death; never considering that the business is placed quite beyond your hand and your counsel, and will be conducted independently of your care.—And Christ forbid that it should ever come into your hands! We should then come presently to a sudden, but forsooth a glorious end!—But do not you meddle with things too high for you. . . . The Lord Jesus preserve you, that your faith may not fail, but grow and conquer! Amen. I have prayed, do pray, and will pray for you: and I do not doubt that I am heard; for I feel that *Amen* in my heart. If what we desire does not come to pass, what is better will: for we look for a kingdom, when all things in this world have passed away."

About the same time Melancthon had informed him, that a great part of their time at Augsburg was spent in tears; and that he could not fully open his mind to Pontanus, for fear of further distressing him

On this Luther writes: "I hate these cares with which you are consumed. It is not the greatness of our cause, but the greatness of our unbelief that occasions them. The cause was more arduous in the times of Huss, and many others. And, however great it may be, its author and conductor is great: for it is not ours. If we are wrong, let us recant: but, if right, why do we make him a liar in his promises, who has bid us be of a composed and cheerful mind. It is your philosophy, not your theology, that disquiets you and your friend Joachim (Camerarius), who seems to suffer with you under the same disease. What worse can the devil do to us, than kill us? As to the cause itself, (whether it be insensibility or courage, I leave it to Christ to judge,) I feel little disquiet about it: nay, I have better hopes of it than I expected to entertain. If *we* are not worthy to support it, others will be. If the danger increases, I shall scarcely be restrained from flying to you, that I may behold the formidable display of Satan's teeth."

Shortly after he says, enough, and more than enough, had already been conceded in the Confession: and adds, "Day and night my mind is exercised upon this subject, considering, reconsidering, arguing, and examining every part of scripture; and my assured confidence in our doctrine continually grows stronger. By the help of God I will suffer no more to be extorted from me, be the consequence what it may." He objects to their speaking of "following his authority." "I would not be, or allow myself to be called, your guide. If it is not equally your cause, let it not be called mine, or be thought to be imposed on you by me."

In the middle of July he writes to Justus Jonas, that he had "less apprehension from the threats, than from the artifices and frauds practised against them at Augsburg." And indeed it is necessary to bear in mind the variety of ways in which the supporters

of the protestant cause were there assailed. They were indeed in general, though not always, treated with a degree of civility, particularly by the emperor; who seems in this way to have led both Luther and Melancthon into the opinion, which they willingly admitted, that he was more favourably disposed to them than others were. But as to the avowed zealots of the papal party, and some also who more sincerely wished for peace, we must conceive of Melancthon, Pontanus, and their coadjutors, as baited by them from day to day, and every approach to their minds incessantly attempted, for the purpose of awing, alluring, or betraying them into concessions injurious to their cause or their honour. And it is under the influence of a daily conflict of this kind that we must suppose the gentle spirit of Melancthon, anxious to refuse nothing that he might lawfully yield, yet most religiously fearful of betraying the truth, to have been harassed to the degree we have seen. The very idea also of involving his country in a civil war, the too probable and eventually the actual consequence, must have been distressing in the extreme to a patriot and a Christian—especially one of Melancthon's temper. Of the direct *artifices* practised, we have the following notice in a manuscript relation of the transactions at Augsburg, from a high authority, quoted by Seckendorf: "The hypocrisy of some was shewn in conversing kindly with the evangelical ministers, that they might corrupt them, and *fish out* of them the secrets of their princes: so that it became necessary to forbid them to enter into these conversations. In short, such were the arts, such the machinations employed, that their adversaries themselves could not sufficiently wonder that the protestants were not entrapped by them."

When Luther heard of the demand that the abrogated rites should be restored, the monasteries rebuilt, and all things replaced on their old footing, he says: "Let us, on our part, demand that they restore to

life Leonard Cæsar,¹ and many others whom they have iniquitously put to death. Let them restore the many souls ruined by their impious doctrine. Let them restore also the wealth extorted by indulgences and other cheats. Let them restore the glory of God, insulted by so many blasphemies; the purity of the church, so foully corrupted; and other things, more than can be enumerated.”

Such were the prudence, the undaunted courage, the faith, the piety, the zeal with which Luther sustained the spirits of his harassed and afflicted friends at this arduous period. All his letters of this date are in the same strain. In one of them, addressed to Pontanus, I find the following fine burst of sentiment and description. “I looked out at my window”—probably alluding to his custom of offering up his devotions standing at a window—“I looked out at my window, and saw two prodigies. I beheld the glittering stars, and all the glorious vault of heaven: I looked around for the pillars by which it was upheld, but I could discover none. Yet it remained firm and secure. The same unseen hand, which had formed, sustained it still. Yet numbers anxiously search on all sides for its supports: could they feel them with their hands, they might then be at ease: but, as this is impossible, they live in constant disquiet, lest the heavens should fall down upon their heads!—I beheld again, and lo thick clouds of water, like a mighty ocean, which I saw nothing to contain, nothing to hold up, rolled above our heads. Yet they descended not upon us; but, after presenting a threatening aspect for a little time, they passed away, and a brilliant rainbow succeeded them. This was our protection². Yet it appeared frail and evanescent: and, though it has ever hitherto proved availing, still numbers think more of the thick and dark mass of waters, than of the slender fleeting arch of

¹ Vol. i. p. 370.² Gen. ix.

light. They want to have sensible proof of its sufficiency: and, because they cannot obtain that, they live in dread of a second deluge." The application of all this to the case of his friends at Augsburg is obvious.

From this passage we obtain some intimation of the means by which our heroic reformer was enabled to soar so high, and to maintain such an elevation of confidence in God. The secret, however, is best discovered to us by the following account given by Vitus Theodorus, one of his companions in the castle of Coburg. "I cannot," he says, "enough admire the extraordinary cheerfulness, constancy, faith, and hope of this man, in these trying times. He constantly feeds these good affections by a very diligent study of the word of God. Then, not a day passes in which he does not employ in prayer at least three of his very best hours. Once I happened to hear him at prayer. Gracious God! what spirit, what faith is there in his expressions! He petitions God with as much reverence as if he were actually in the divine presence; and yet with as firm a hope and confidence as he would address a father or a friend. 'I know,' said he, 'thou art our Father and our God: therefore I am sure thou wilt bring to nought the persecutors of thy children. For, shouldst thou fail to do this, thine own cause, being connected with ours, would be endangered. It is entirely thine own concern: we, by thy providence, have been compelled to take a part. Thou therefore wilt be our defence!'—While I was listening to Luther praying in this manner at a distance, my soul seemed on fire within me, to hear the man address God so like a friend, and yet with so much gravity and reverence: and also to hear him, in the course of his prayer, insisting on the promises contained in the Psalms, as if he was sure his petitions would be granted."

We proceed now to the concluding transactions at

the diet.—The conferences between the two parties were reluctantly abandoned by the Roman-catholic princes, most of whom would fain have effected a reconciliation; but then it must have been by the protestants submitting to their opponents in all material points, and restoring the old order of things. The terminating of the conferences was, on the other hand, highly agreeable to Luther, who saw that reconciliation was impossible, and that no good could result from them.

Finding all means ineffectual to accomplish his purpose, the emperor, on the seventh of September, after consultation with the partizans of Rome, sent for the protestant princes, and in the presence only of his brother, and a select number of his confidential advisers, expressed to them, by the mouth of Frederic count Palatine, his surprise and disappointment at their conduct; “that they, who were few in number, should have introduced novelties, contrary to the ancient and most sacred custom of the universal church; should have framed to themselves a singular kind of religion, different from what was professed by the catholics, by himself, his brother, and all the princes and states of the empire; nay, utterly disagreeing with the practice of all the kings in the earth, and of their own ancestors. Being desirous however of peace, he would use his interest with the pope and the other princes to procure a general council, as soon as the place could be agreed upon; but still on this condition, that they should, in the mean time, follow the same religion which he and the rest of the princes professed.” The protestants, in reply, “denied that they had formed any new sect; thanked him for the proposal of a council; but, as to receiving the rites and doctrines of the church of Rome, which had been abolished, they declared that they could not do it consistently with their consciences.” He then ordered a committee to be chosen for framing a decree, and required the

elector of Saxony to stay four days longer to hear it read.

After hearing the draught of the recess read, the elector of Saxony and his associates remarked, by Pontanus, "That they could never admit that the Confession had been refuted: on the contrary, they were more than ever convinced that it was conformable to the word of God, which they would more fully have demonstrated, had a copy of the Refutation been allowed them; but that, as that had been refused, they had, with great care, drawn up an answer to so much of its contents as they had been able to recollect; which answer they now begged to present to the emperor.¹ That, with respect to disseminating their sentiments, and making proselytes, they had compelled no man to embrace their doctrine, nor ever would do it; but that, as they had stated in their protest against the decree of Spire, they could not be restrained from doing, within their respective jurisdictions, what conscience dictated with regard to religion. That they had no communion with anabaptists and sacramentarians; nor were such persons to be found in their dominions. And, finally, as the case was most important, and some of the parties concerned were now present only by deputy, they desired to have a copy of the proposed decree, that they might fully make up their minds respecting it before it passed."

The Apology, or answer to the Refutation, was refused by the emperor; who the next day, by the mouth of the elector of Brandenburg, "expressed his astonishment at the assurance which the protestant princes manifested, in affirming the truth and piety of their religion, and thus implicitly charging, not only the emperor and the other princes, but all their own ancestors, as heretics. In the proposed decree," he told them, "he had granted more than he ought to have

¹ Melancthon's Defence of the Confession—one of the symbolical books of the Lutheran church.

done ; and they would have to answer for the serious consequences which might follow, if they did not acquiesce in its enactments. That, as to their offered answer to the Refutation, he had before declared that he would admit of no further debate: he neither might nor ought to do it: that nothing should be altered (in their favour) in the decree as already drawn up ; and that unless they submitted to it, and concurred in it, he would take another course—in fact, that occasion would be given him to join with the other princes in making a new decree, and in taking such measures, that the sects lately sprung up might be utterly rooted out, and the ancient faith, rites, and ceremonies be preserved in force—which were things that properly belonged to his care and duty. That he too regarded conscience, and the salvation of his soul ; and would far less forsake the ancient religion, which had been handed down through successive ages, than they would their new one.”—The elector of Brandenburg further took upon him to say, “ That, unless they obeyed, the rest of the states would do what the emperor should be pleased to command them ; they having already promised to assist him with their lives and fortunes, for putting an end to these dissensions ; and that the emperor, on the other hand, had passed his word to bend all his force and power to that object, and not again to quit the limits of the empire before he had seen it accomplished. These things,” the elector said, “ he now represented to them by order of the princes and states.”

To the latter part of this address, the protestant princes replied with spirit, by Pontanus ; “ That they heard it with astonishment: that they had given no cause for it ; being as ready as any persons to venture their lives and fortunes in the service of the emperor and the empire.” Several of the princes also afterwards apologized for it, declaring it was unauthorized, and that they had told the emperor so : who is said

himself to have pronounced it "unwarranted and more than was called for."

The elector of Saxony left Augsburg that evening, after having with singular cheerfulness and alacrity of manner, in taking leave of the emperor, again expressed his confidence, "That the doctrine of the Confession was firmly founded on scripture, and that the gates of hell could never prevail, or even stand against it." A few days after, at Nuremberg, being asked by the senate his opinion concerning the measures which it would be proper to adopt, he wisely and piously replied, "That he had no doubt God would mercifully uphold his holy word, and the confessors of it: that his intention was, to take the advice of all his counsellors and divines, and that he recommended to them and the other protestant states to do the same: after which they might communicate counsels with one another."

Besides the "Confession of Augsburg," two others were presented to the diet: one, called the Tetrapolitan, deriving its name from the four cities of Strasbourg, Constance, Memmingen, and Lindaw, and the other that of Zwingle, the Swiss reformer. The former of these was drawn up by Bucer, and, as well as that of which we have so largely treated, was esteemed a masterpiece. Indeed the two differed, in sentiment, in little else than the article of the eucharist—concerning the sense in which Christ's body and blood are present in that sacrament. Bucer, who seems to have occupied a middle ground between Luther and Zwingle upon that point, and more nearly the ground of our own church than either of them, earnestly pleaded that, as the danger seemed to thicken, and their difference did not appear very essential, they should all join in one confession—an union which the landgrave of Hesse also had long been labouring to effect: but here even the mild and yielding Melancthon was as tenacious as Luther himself could be,

and would by no means admit of it, or hold communion with those who differed from him upon this subject! Such, alas! is the weakness, and, on one point or another, the narrowness of human nature, even in the best and greatest of men.

Of the confession of the four cities a separate refutation, and that of a sharper kind, was prepared by Faber and Eckius. The authors of these repeated refutations were liberally rewarded for the services they had rendered—Faber, in particular, soon after obtaining from Ferdinand the bishopric of Vienna: which gave occasion to Erasmus sarcastically to remark, that “*poor Luther made many rich.*”

That eminent scholar had been invited to be present at Augsburg, and to assist with his advice in the religious discussions: but he declined the honour, having no inclination to incur the odium with which it would be attended, probably from both parties. Indeed he was seriously ill at the time. He corresponded however with different persons concerned—Campeggio, Melancthon, and others; still preserving his character, by “hanging always,” as Maimbourg not unjustly expresses it, “in suspense between the two parties.” He pleaded however for the toleration of the protestants, as the only means of preventing dangerous extremities. “The power of the emperor,” he writes to Campeggio, “is great; but all do not acknowledge it. The Germans so acknowledge his authority, as rather to command than to obey. Luther’s doctrine is spread all over Germany; so that from the ocean as far as Switzerland that chain of mischief is stretched. If the emperor therefore should declare, that he would in all things comply with the interest and desire of the pope, it is to be feared he would have but few to approve his doings. Time and patience sometimes cure the worst distempers: the Bohemians were tolerated, though they acknowledged not the pope; and, if the Lutherans were treated in the same manner it would not be

amiss, in my judgment.”—“ Such however,” remarks Maimbourg, with evident satisfaction, “ Such were not the sentiments of the emperor or of the catholic princes.”

The diet continued to sit about six weeks after the departure of the protestant princes, engaged in providing supplies for the Turkish war, and arranging other matters; and it then closed by issuing its recess, on the nineteenth of November. This decree enjoined the continuance, or the restoration where they had been abolished, of all the accustomed rights and superstitions; condemned the denial of “ free will”¹ as “ brutish, and reproachful to God,” and rejected the doctrine of justification by faith only; ordained that married priests should be ejected from their livings, which should immediately be given to others; but that such as should forsake their wives, and return to their former state, might be restored by their bishops, with the consent of the pope or his legate: the rest were to have “ no refuge or sanctuary, but to be banished or otherwise condignly punished.” It declared null and void “ all unreasonable compacts which the priests had any where been forced to make, and all unjust alienations of church property:” that “ nothing should be changed in those things which concerned the faith and worship of God; and that they who acted otherwise should forfeit life and goods:” that “ monasteries and religious houses, which had been destroyed, should be rebuilt; and such persons within the territories of the protestants, as followed the ancient faith, should be taken under the protection of the empire: that application should be made to the pope for a general council, to be summoned within six months, and to meet within twelve

¹ The reader must distinguish between free will, in the sense in which it was denied by the reformers, and is rejected by our church, (Art. 10.) and free agency. All that is meant to be denied is, that fallen man will ever choose that which is *spiritually* good, without the preventient grace of God.

months afterwards: that no appeal or protest against the enactments of this decree should have force; and that, to the end that the decree might be observed and put in execution as far as it concerned faith and religion, all men should be obliged to employ whatever fortune God had been pleased to bestow upon them, and their blood and lives beside; and that no man should be admitted into the judicature in the Imperial Chamber," (the supreme court of the empire, supported at the common charge, for determining all questions that arose among the different states and members,) "unless he sanctioned this decree made about religion; and that those who were admitted and refused to do so should be expelled.

Such was the treatment which the pope, the emperor, and the great majority of the princes and states of Germany thought proper for men, to whom, after all allowances, we may apply the language of the apostle, and say concerning them, "Of whom the world was not worthy." Such was the "infamous"¹ decree of the diet of Augsburg. We cannot scruple to apply this epithet to it, whether we contemplate its particular clauses concerning the married priests—holding out favour and reward to those who would "forsake their wives," but depriving of "all refuge and sanctuary," as the most atrocious of criminals, those who should retain them; concerning the restoration of all the exposed and exploded superstitions and idolatries; and concerning the obligations of all men to employ their blood and treasure in giving effect to these enactments:—or whether we consider its general tenor and design. It openly trampled under foot all the sacred rights of conscience, and breathed a determination to suppress by force and bloodshed, and at the risk of kindling the flames of civil war throughout Germany, the light which had

¹ Dean Milner.

lately broken in, and the reformation which was in progress. One of the many important lessons which we are to learn from the review of such histories is, the duty of gratitude for the exemption which we enjoy from evils of this kind, and for the blessed changes which have taken place since the commencement of the sixteenth century. At the same time we must not too confidently rely on the continuance of our present repose and prosperity. Still the spirit of the world is hostile to that which is of God; and it may again shew itself to be so beyond our expectations. It behoves us "while we have the light to walk in the light, that we may be the children of the light—lest darkness come upon us:" and still to remember that, "if we love father, or mother, or our own lives more than Christ," we are not and "cannot be his disciples."

The principles which were advanced in the interviews between the protestants and the more dignified of their opponents, particularly the emperor himself, may also deserve our remark. They were such as are still urged, though now generally in a more covert manner, against those who exhibit the 'singularity' which ever belongs, more or less, to "the power of godliness," in this fallen world. "The protestants were *few* in number, an *inconsiderable* party: they ought to submit to the majority, and follow the same religion with the emperor and the rest of the princes. Their's was a *novel* doctrine: they introduced a *singular* kind of religion, disagreeing with the practice of all the kings of the earth. If they were right, *all others* were wrong; and even *their own ancestors* all heretics. Their *assurance* could not be sufficiently wondered at. The emperor had regard to *conscience* as well as they, and would maintain the *ancient* religion." It is somewhat amusing to hear the gravity with which these arguments are urged; while all appeals to the authority of scripture are considered as superseded by them. Luther subsequently made

remarks on some of them, which may deserve our attention. Lecturing on Isaiah xix. 11, "How say ye, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient Kings?" he says: "This was the first argument of the ungodly against the righteous, and it will be the last: 'Would you, standing alone, condemn so ancient a church? Are you alone possessed of wisdom? and were our ancestors blind?' With these two things, the reputation of wisdom, and the boast of antiquity, their minds are inflated. The Diatribe of Erasmus amounts to nothing but what is here written, 'I am the son of the ancient.'" Again, on xxviii. 21, 22—the rejection of the Jews: "They assail us with this argument, 'Do you think that you, so few in number, are the church, in preference to us, who are numerous, powerful, and possessed of official right?' We simply answer, as Paul did to the Jews, However many and great ye be, if ye believe not in Christ, and place not your trust in his righteousness, we regard you not. You are not the church by virtue of your filling ecclesiastical offices. It is written that the abomination may 'stand in the holy place,' and that antichrist shall 'sit in the temple of God.' The church is known by faith in Christ, and not by office and numbers."

Finally, It is probably to be regarded as a matter of congratulation, that all the attempts to effect the proposed accommodation between the parties failed. Had it been accomplished, it must have been by concessions which would have proved eventually, if not immediately, dangerous to the protestant cause. Luther well observes: "If mutual concessions are made, they will take our's largely, more largely, most largely, and make their own sparingly, more sparingly, most sparingly." Seckendorf seems also with good reason jealous of leaving the Roman-catholic prelates in possession of that full jurisdiction, which Melancthon, and even Luther, would have conceded to them. It might have been kept in check while

such men as the first reformers presided over the protestant societies, but, when they were removed, and less powerful and less watchful pastors succeeded, it might have gone far towards carrying things gradually back to their former state. Here too the finger of providence is to be acknowledged and adored.

CHAPTER XVIII.

*Protestant measures of defence—League of Smalkald—
Pacification of Nuremberg—Death of the Elector
John, and succession of John Frederic—Progress
of the Reformation—Writings of Luther.*

THE decree of the diet of Augsburg naturally excited the most serious apprehensions in all the members of the protestant body: and they accordingly proceeded to form such plans, and to adopt such measures, as appeared most likely to protect them against the rising storm.

Luther, sensible how greatly the minds of the German people would be agitated on the occasion, and how much those, in particular, who favoured his cause might need both encouragement and counsel, published, before the close of the year, his “Warning to his beloved Countrymen.” In this work he complains loudly of the inexorable spirit of his adversaries, especially the ecclesiastics, “whom, in the late diet, no submissions, no entreaties, no considerations whatever could soften. Their threats however, he is confident, would be vain and impotent. There was even danger of their raising popular seditions against their authors: which, notwithstanding, he condemned, and discountenanced by all means in his power. If war should ensue his party were free from the guilt of it, and might expect protection from God: but for himself, if he lost his life in the contest, the

pope would find this a fatal blow to his own cause. His adversaries," he affirmed, "were compelled most reluctantly to acknowledge, that the Confession contained no article contrary to scripture, but only to the pontifical impositions: they therefore were guilty of tyranny and murder, who shed the blood of innocent persons for no other crime than adherence to the protestant doctrines. If war were commenced against them, he for his part would write nothing, either to incite his friends to self-defence or to discountenance them in it, but would leave to the lawyers the question of its equity: yet he must own, that he could not condemn those who defended themselves against rapine and slaughter." He animadverts severely on the papal party for concealing their "Refutation." "They were ashamed of it, or afraid to let it see the light. Indeed, when read in the diet it was heard in sad and downcast silence; the very reverse of the joy and approbation with which the Confession was listened to." He adverts to some of the arts which had been practised at Augsburg; and then, "as he knows they called him 'the prophet of Germany,' he says he would assume the office, and warn the people not to take arms against the protestant princes, even though the emperor should require it; for the command would be one which he had no right to give. He, however, could not apprehend such a proceeding on the part of the emperor. He again recounts and exposes the monstrous errors and abuses of popery; and concludes with repeating his earnest deprecation of forcible and warlike measures, and declaring his own ardent desire of peace and quiet.

He soon after published "Animadversions on the Edict of Augsburg," and a "Defence" of this and the preceding work against an anonymous censurer of them, who wrote from Dresden.

Thus Luther, in his appropriate way, did his part to fortify the minds of the people, and to support the great cause of the reformation. The princes and

states also did the same in their way. They held various meetings, and formed leagues for mutual defence.

The landgrave, more impetuous than the rest, and less averse to the doctrine of the Swiss reformers respecting the sacrament, entered into alliance with Zurich, Basle, and Strasburg. The protestant leaders also met at Smalkald, in Upper Saxony, and laid the foundation of the famous league which took its name from that place. Seven princes and twenty-four cities entered into the league. The cities in general wished the Swiss to be admitted as parties to it, but the elector of Saxony, the marquis of Brandenburg, and others, would not agree to this, on account of their difference on the subject of the sacrament;—a determination in which they were unhappily confirmed by Luther. The rejection of the Swiss alliance seems, in many points of view, to be just subject of regret: it displayed a discord among brethren: but, as far as it only detracted from the strength of the confederation, we may concur in the pious sentiment of Melancthon. He regards the hand of divine providence in it, and fears that, if all had been united, confidence in their own strength might have led them to proceed with a precipitation and impetuosity unbecoming a religious reformation.

The confederates further addressed letters to the kings of England, France, and Denmark. To the last of these they proposed a concurrence in their league: of the two former they chiefly asked, that they would use their influence to obtain a free general council. Friendly answers were received from these monarchs; and the king of France, in particular, would doubtless have been glad to secure allies within the empire. No specific assistance however was at this period derived from these foreign powers, except a small supply in money from the king of England.

In addition to the object of mutual defence, it

appears to have been proposed by the contracting parties at Smalkald, that learned men, divines and lawyers, should be deputed by them, to draw up a scheme of rites and government to be observed in all the reformed churches, that they might not be exposed to the reproach of "doing every man what was right in his own eyes." The task however was found to be one of great delicacy, and attended with so many difficulties, that the design was abandoned.¹

The question here presents itself, how far it was lawful for the protestant princes and states to defend themselves, by force of arms, against their superior lord, the emperor, and the decrees of the diet. Various quotations from Luther, upon this subject, as collected by Dr. Milner, have appeared in the former volume of this history: but we may remark, that the reasons assigned in some of them were either temporary or not very satisfactory:² and the passages do not appear to exhibit Luther's latest and most matured judgment on the question. On some of them Seckendorf very justly remarks, that Luther assumed that the German princes were "absolutely subjects of the emperor," as the people under a despotic government are of their monarch;—"a position which statesmen and the legal authorities could never admit." It appears,³ that the several princes and

¹ This acknowledgement would be highly gratifying to a writer of the tone and temper of Bossuet, bishop of Meaux. In the fourth book of his celebrated "*Histoire des Variations*," he has collected proofs of the defective order and discipline of the protestant churches. But even the disorders incident to liberty are preferable to the constrained uniformity produced by absolute despotism: and, much as the Christian mind will find to lament in the collections of this acute enemy of the reformation, it will still feel itself, when taking even the most unfavourable view of the Saxon churches of the sixteenth century, in the midst of a scene much more resembling that presented by the apostolic epistles, than in taking any view, at all approaching to fairness, of the Romish church of the same period. Let the confessions and lamentations of the reformers, which Bossuet has brought together, be qualified by such passages as that of Luther, addressed to the elector of Saxony, in the preceding chapter. Above, p. 25.

² Above, i. 221.

³ See the first vol. of Robertson's Charles V.

states were sovereign within their respective dominions; that the emperor was only the head of the confederacy formed among them for their common interest; that, on his inauguration, he entered into a solemn engagement (styled "the capitulation,") to preserve the rights and privileges of each, inviolate; and that neither he alone, nor even the assembled diet, could be entitled to interfere in the religious, and other merely *internal* regulations of any state, without the consent, and much more in opposition to the sentiments, of its head. On these grounds even the most conscientious of the princes became satisfied, and Luther concurred with them, that they would be justified in opposing force to force, for the defence of their own rights, and of the civil and religious liberties of their subjects, in case the emperor should attempt to execute, by arms, the edict of Augsburg. To this strict line of defence against actual violence all the leading parties, with one exception, confined their measures. The landgrave, as on a former occasion,¹ was not content with this: he would have begun the attack; and some few of the cities seconded him: but his counsel was justly rejected and condemned by all the rest.

The *expediency* of the course adopted by the protestant powers is another question. There can be no doubt that their league, combining with the peculiar circumstances of the times, held the emperor in check, and formed the great obstacle to his ambitious designs with respect to Germany, for many years; and thus served to protect the reformation to the very end of Luther's life: but it was, at the same time, and for this very reason, in a high degree galling to the proud and aspiring mind of Charles, and tended to irritate the severity of his proceedings when he did succeed in crushing the confederation, and, as he vainly imagined, had finally triumphed over the protestant cause.

¹ Vol. i. p. 392.

But for the present it pleased providence to relieve the protestants from their apprehensions in an unexpected manner. The emperor was by no means prepared to engage in a civil war. The war with the Turks was of itself sufficiently urgent. They had again invaded Hungary with an immense army, and for the avowed purpose of dethroning Ferdinand: and the protestants, before the late diet separated, had declared that they could neither furnish any aid against the Turks, unless they were themselves protected, and peace secured within the empire; nor contribute to the expences of the Imperial Chamber, unless they were placed on the same footing as the other states, with respect to that court. Contrary also to their solemn protestations, as well as to those of some of the Roman-catholic princes, Charles had lately procured his brother to be elected king of the Romans, and his successor in the empire; which was considered as a step towards establishing hereditary and absolute authority, repugnant to the constitution, and subversive of the liberties of Germany. On all these grounds he was desirous of conciliation, and readily listened to the proposals of the archbishop of Mentz, and Lewis, elector Palatine, who offered to mediate between him and the protestants. By this means, after many difficulties and protracted conferences, a pacific arrangement was at length effected, on terms highly advantageous to the protestants. This pacification called, from the place where it was agreed upon, the Pacification of Nuremberg, was settled in that city in the month of July, 1532, and solemnly ratified, the month following, in the imperial diet held at Ratisbon. "By this treaty," says Dr. Robertson, "the protestants of Germany, who had hitherto been viewed only as a religious sect, came henceforth to be considered as a political body of no small consequence." How far their attainment of political consequence was conducive to the interests of genuine religion among them, or how

far, on the contrary, it was prejudicial, and required some powerful counterpoise, may furnish matter for grave and serious consideration: but one cannot forbear rejoicing in their present deliverance, and in the triumph of a righteous cause.

Scultetus here very properly calls us to admire the providence of God, which made the Turkish sultan the great instrument of annulling, or at least suspending the execution of the decree of Augsburg against the reformation.

Maimbourg affects to regard this pacification as a mere provisional measure: and such it might really be, as extending only to the time of holding a general council, or some assembly of the empire, authorized to decide upon the questions at issue: but Pallavicini gives us to understand that it was considered as provisional in another sense, namely, as made only to meet the present exigencies, and intended to be rescinded when circumstances should permit. He says, the emperor told the pope, that, "if the difficulties of the times were got over, the protestants might be compelled to observe the former edicts of Worms and Augsburg, which were not dead, but only slept."

After the pacification, the protestants, in testimony of their gratitude to the emperor, exerted themselves with extraordinary zeal to support him in the war against the Turks; and, the other states vying with them, such an army was raised as Germany had seldom seen. Charles putting himself, for the first time, at the head of his troops, marched in person against Solyman. Each of them however dreading the power and good fortune of the other, they conducted themselves with such caution that no advantage could be gained on either side, and the campaign afforded no memorable event. At its close, Solyman marched back to Constantinople: and it is remarked that for Charles, "in his first essay in arms, to have opposed such a leader was no small honour; to have

obliged him to retreat, merited very considerable praise."¹

Immediately after the retreat of the Turks, the emperor, impatient to revisit Spain, set out for Italy, on his way thither; and again met the pope at Bologna, being seriously intent upon procuring such a general council as might satisfy the Germans. The whole of Charles's conduct however had given no satisfaction to the pope, who began to conclude that there was "little hope in the affairs of Germany; and that it behoved him to think of a preventive, that the disease might not pass to other parts of the body of the church."² In fact the mind of Clement was now alienated from the emperor, and he henceforward courted the alliance of the king of France.

But while Charles's conduct was regarded at Rome as a portentous deviation from the duty of a good son of the church, such as "gave cause to fear a sudden revenge from heaven," it was differently thought of by more impartial persons. They commended his piety and wisdom in endeavouring to unite all parties against the Turk, the common enemy of Christendom; and remarked, "that the maxim, so renowned at Rome, 'That it was more meet to persecute heretics than infidels,' was well fitted for the pope's dominion, but not to the general benefit of the Christian world."³

With respect to the council, the pope making a merit of necessity, affected great zeal for it, so much so as to send a nuncio, with an ambassador from the emperor, into Germany, to make arrangements preparatory to it with the protestants: but he would never agree to hold it on any other terms than those which he knew would not be accepted: such as, that it should be called by the authority of the pope alone; that it should be held in Italy; (where it would be under his controul;) and that the protes-

¹ Robertson.

² F. Paul.

³ F. Paul.

tants should bind themselves to submit to its decisions, even before it was settled by what rule they were to be formed—whether by that of scripture alone, or by human in common with divine authority; and that none should have votes but those to whom the papal usages assigned them. In short, he would agree to no council at all but one that should be guided by his own will. The cardinals more openly urged that none was necessary; for “a council,” said they, “could not choose but approve what Leo X. had determined, except it would become a conventicle, or unlawful assembly, as all those were which had separated themselves from the doctrine and obedience of the pope.”

The church of Christ was about this time deprived of three eminent persons, who had rendered the greatest services to the reformation. The first of these was Ulric Zwingli, the Swiss reformer; who fell in a battle which took place between the popish and the protestant cantons, October 11, 1531, and to which, according to the custom of his country, he had accompanied the troops of Zurich. He was only in the forty-fourth year of his age: and his death was followed six weeks after by that of his distinguished coadjutor, Œcolampadius of Basle, five years older than himself. The closing scenes of each of these great men furnish interesting and edifying materials to the Christian historian: but they naturally belong to another branch of the reformation.

The contemporaneous deaths of these two persons, who had effected such an extensive change of religion in Switzerland, gave great encouragement to the enemies of the reformation: and they had further a near prospect of the removal of Luther himself only a month afterwards. He was seized with violent and very dangerous illness, and his physicians pronounced him on the verge of apoplexy. But something of that extraordinary kind, which per-

vaded his history, marked his behaviour on this occasion. Hearing those about him (among whom were Melancthon and Rorarius,) remark, what triumph it would occasion to the papists, should he too be taken off at that period, he roused himself, and said with a daring confidence, "But I shall not die now: that I know for certain. God will not confirm the papal abominations by my death at this time. He will not give to them that additional occasion of boasting. Satan, indeed, would willingly kill me if he could: he hourly besets my steps: but not what he wills, but what the Lord wills, shall be done." And he proved right in his anticipation.

The Saxon church however sustained a heavy loss a little more than six months after, in the death of the third illustrious person referred to, the excellent elector of Saxony, John, surnamed the Constant. He survived the decree of the diet, confirming the pacification of Nuremberg, only thirteen days. For some time past he had been in an infirm state of health, but had in a measure rallied again, when he was suddenly seized with apoplexy, and died, before his sons or any other of his relations could come to him, at a hunting seat in the neighbourhood of Wittenberg. Luther and Melancthon were sent for, but they found him in the article of death. Luther said of him, "With him probity expired, as with his brother Frederic wisdom had done:" a mode of expression which sufficiently limits itself, while it strongly marks the distinguishing virtue of the respective characters. He was affectionately attached to Luther; and in Luther's late dangerous illness he visited him, and among other things said to him, "I beg you will not be anxious about your wife and children, in case God should call you hence: I will consider them as entrusted to me, and will take care of them as my own." He took such delight, we are told, in the holy scriptures, that he would frequently have them read to him, by youths of noble families,

as much as six hours in the day; an exercise which, with such an example before their eyes, must have tended as much to the benefit of his youthful readers as to his own. He was accustomed also to take down the sermons which he heard with the greatest accuracy. Such habits, for one in his rank of life, and involved in so much important business, seem to carry us back to the days of David or of Daniel, and shew what may and will be done when the heart is thoroughly engaged.—His deadness to the world also was very admirable. When he was informed of the rebellion of the rustics, which led to so afflictive a war in Germany, he said: “If it be the will of God that I should continue a prince, as I have hitherto been, his will be done: but, if otherwise, I can descend to a lower station; fewer horses and a humbler equipage will serve me very well.” Luther preached and published two sermons on his death, from 1 Thess. iv. 13, 14, shedding many tears while he delivered them. In the former of them he says: “We give thanks to God who comprehended our beloved prince in the benefit and influence of the death and resurrection of Christ. You know what risk, even of life itself, he encountered at Augsburg. But I will not commend him for his virtues, though they were great: I acknowledge that he was a sinner, and needed the remission of sins. I do not therefore set him forth as perfect. Yet was he an excellent and most kind man, free from all guile, and one in whom I could never trace pride, anger, or envy. He was ready to forgive: nay, mild and gentle even to excess. If he sometimes erred in his government, it is not to be wondered at; for princes are but men, and we may say, that ten devils beset them, for one that assaults a private person.”

Happily the reformation lost no ground by the death of John. “The new elector, no less attached than his” father “to the opinions of Luther, occupied

the station which he had held at the head of the protestant party, and defended, with the boldness and zeal of youth, that cause which" John "had fostered and supported with the caution of more advanced age."¹ John Frederic has already appeared in this history, acting almost as the associate of his father in all his important affairs, and displaying the firmness and piety which never forsook him in the trying circumstances through which he was afterwards called to pass.

We may avail ourselves of this period of comparative repose to the German church, to glance at the progress which the reformation was making more generally. Many such accounts might be collected as are given in the former volume:² but, as they would for the most part want that degree of particularity which might make them interesting, it may suffice to say, that the reformation was continually spreading and advancing itself in Germany, Switzerland, and other parts of the continent. About this time also appeared Tindal's translation of the Bible into English; and our own country was casting off the papal yoke. Here likewise, and in France,³ Belgium, the dominions of duke George of Saxony, and in other places, many now suffered for the truth:

¹ Robertson.

² Vol. i. p. 204, 231, 322, &c.

³ At Limoges, one John Cadurcus, (du Quercy,) a licentiate in law, having been condemned to the stake, the monk who had been appointed to preach, as was customary on such occasions, gave out for his text, 1 Tim. iv. 1: "In the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." Cadurcus, on hearing this, cried out, 'Go on to the next words—the words immediately following!' On which the monk stood confounded, and the condemned man proceeded, 'If you do not go on, I will: it follows—"Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats:"' and he then enlarged on the words to the assembled multitude, applying them to the well known impositions of the church of Rome. He afterwards suffered death with constancy.—Sculdetus.

while to others of their brethren their sufferings furnished illustrious opportunities of exercising their Christian charity. This was particularly the case at Strasburg. The duke of Lorrain had proscribed several thousands of his subjects, at a time of great scarcity; and they were in consequence compelled, in their wanderings, to subsist on such fruits and herbs as grew wild in the fields. The divines of Strasburg took compassion on these poor people, and successfully importuned the senate to receive them into the city, and support them till they could be otherwise disposed of.

The name of Wolfgang, prince of Anhalt, as a supporter of the protestant cause, has already occurred. The accounts of him and of the associate princes, his cousins, John, George, and Joachim, are highly satisfactory. Wolfgang had visited the Saxon court soon after the commencement of Luther's proceedings; and, being convinced of the truth of his doctrines, had invited him to preach them at Zerbst, in 1522. He was one of those who subscribed the Confession of Augsburg. George was an ecclesiastic of exalted and most exemplary character, who will deserve a particular notice in a subsequent part of this history. He earnestly recommended to his brothers, John and Joachim, that, "abandoning the figments of men, they should delight themselves in the word of God alone." By his advice, they sent to Wittenberg for a faithful protestant minister to be settled at Dessau. Hausman, who had been removed from Zwickau in a manner by no means creditable to the senate and people of that place, was the person recommended to him.

Amongst the accessions to the protestant cause, we have also to reckon Joachim, son and successor of elector of Brandenburg. He began about this time to manifest his attachment to Luther and the reformation. But to him also our attention will be more particularly called at a future period. Philip

marquis of Baden presented an opposite example. After having encouraged the preaching of the reformed doctrine, he this year turned back to popery, and expelled the protestant ministers from his dominions.

The following anecdote, in which Ferdinand, the emperor's brother, is concerned, may not be unworthy of insertion. Having been about this time unfortunate in his operations against the Turks, he is reported to have said to his counsellors, "I wonder how it is, that all my undertakings fail." One of them, an Austrian by birth, replied, "That happens to you, sir, which has ever happened to kings and emperors: those who shed human blood, and connive at sin, have always enemies raised up to them by the divine judgment, such as they cannot resist. Expect therefore no better success, till you desist from your opposition to religion." Thus, even in the councils of the royal and imperial supporters of the papal tyranny, there were not wanting persons to raise their voice in behalf of God and his truth.

This year (1532) I find the following mention of two eminent men. "In France three distinct fountains were opened from which the blessed waters of the heavenly doctrine might be drawn; namely, at Toulouse, Orleans, and Bourges.—At the first of these places *Julius Caesar Scaliger* caused Christ to be known: and not only the city of Agen, where he resided, but a great part of Guienne and Gascony, owed to him the restoration of true religion, through the means of pious men who resorted to his house." Again: "At Orleans and Bourges some had already tasted of the heavenly doctrine; but *John Calvin*, having come, at twenty-three years of age, to study the law at these places, under Peter de Stellâ (de l'Etoile) and Andrew Alciat, and combining with this study the pursuit of divine knowledge, the minds of many were by his means confirmed and excited."¹

¹ Beza and Scultet.

He studied Greek also at Bourges under Melchior Wolmar, who was secretly a Lutheran.

We will close the present chapter with some notice of the writings of Luther about this period.

In the year 1531, he published nothing of consequence in addition to the works which have been already mentioned. He was much occupied in preaching at Wittemberg, in the absence of Bugenhagen, who had gone, by invitation, to Lubeck, to establish a reformed ministry in that place. The next year he printed various expositions, sermons, and other minor pieces, which would be very edifying to the churches, but need not be particularly specified in this place. Some brief quotations however may be given.

Let the following passages, on the evidences of a state of grace, be combined with the writer's well known and constant assertion of the doctrine of justification by faith only.—In his lectures on the Sermon on the Mount, he says: "Our forgiving our neighbour is an external *proof* that we are ourselves forgiven by God. Where there is not this proof, I cannot be certain of the internal blessing of justification: rather, I deceive myself and others. But, if I find that I truly forgive my neighbour, then I may conclude thus; 'This proceeds not from myself: I perceive that by the grace of God I am a new man.'" Again, in his discourses on the Christian armour, (Ephes. vi.) speaking of "the breastplate of righteousness," which it appears he understood to mean a holy walk and conversation, he says: "When I live a holy life before men, and can repel all charges against me, I become certain of my faith; as the tree is proved to be good by good fruit: and thus faith increases and is confirmed. But this is not the case with those who live in sin: for thus faith is staggered; and the mind rendered incapable of the confidence and consolation that God is pacified towards

it, and forgives those sins in which it still continues."

Speaking of the advent of Christ he says: "O God, were not that day to be looked for, I would rather never have been born! See what is the existing state of things, and how the gospel is treated in the world: what persecutions, calumnies, hatred, and contempt? And then, among ourselves, how many false and deceitful, wayward and wicked!... These things wound and wear down the hearts of Christians. Why then do we not cry to God to terminate the present state of things? We should be most miserable, could we not hope for deliverance.

In discoursing on the second Psalm, he thus notices what he had himself witnessed: "In our time, the success of the gospel was at first great; and all hoped, as the apostles did, before they were enlightened by the Spirit of God in the nature of his kingdom, that our doctrine would introduce public liberty and tranquillity: but, when disturbances arose, and the true character of the spiritual kingdom was discerned, with the infirmities of good men, and the like; then many drew back, and began to hate the gospel. What was the cause of all this, but ignorance of the nature and conditions of the kingdom of Christ—which is of that kind, that it is every where exposed to the opposition of the world and of Satan. They who are not aware of this will fail when dangers arise, and will condemn the gospel as a seditious doctrine.

He elsewhere complains of the conceit and arrogance both of the nobles and the common people; "that they thought they understood the gospel not only better than he did, but better than even S. Paul himself; and were wiser in their own eyes than all their pastors:" whence he anticipated approaching calamity.

- In a sermon on "God is love," we find the following painful acknowledgment: "I confess, and others

join me in the confession, that there is not now the same diligence and zeal as under the papacy. There is not the same fervency under the gospel as was seen in the time of the priests and monks, when so many foundations were formed, so many buildings raised; when no one was so poor as not to contribute something. Now, a whole city can scarcely support a single preacher. All grasp and seize for themselves, and will not endure a reprovcr. Whence arises this scandalous evil? 'From your doctrine,' cry our adversaries, with the lungs of Stentor—because men are taught that they must not trust in their good works. But it is the devil who imputes to a pious and salutary doctrine what arises from himself, and from wicked men abusing that doctrine."

Luther no doubt here paints strongly, aiming to produce a conduct contrary to that of which he complains. At the same time, numbers, released from the obligations which had extorted certain services from them under the old regimen, and continuing strangers to any new and better principle, would "abuse liberty for an occasion to the flesh." Yet let the reader compare the account given, in the preceding chapter, of Saxony, as contrasted with the surrounding countries, and he will see that Luther was as far from conceding that protestantism must yield to popery in its power of producing good works, as we are at this day from granting, that those who renounce all confidence in their own righteousness fall short, in moral virtue and usefulness of life, of those who trust in what they do.

We may confirm this statement by the following extract from an address of the protestants to Granvelle, the emperor's chief minister, in the year 1540. "It would really be very acceptable to us, if the emperor would examine the whole matter, and diligently inquire where it is that the ministers of the church are most civilly and kindly used, schools best ordered, the functions and ministry of the church

most decently performed; whether in our territories or amongst our adversaries. If the emperor would give himself this trouble, we need not make any apology to justify and defend the matter of fact, respecting the application of the ecclesiastical funds; for the thing itself would speak in our behalf, and move him to set about a true reformation of the church."

His sentiments concerning pastoral authority, and the right of setting up for religious teachers, will hardly suit an age of relaxed or almost abrogated discipline.—He approved of specially opposing to the anabaptists, who privily crept in and injured the people, their entire want of authority to exercise the office of teachers. "Who called them," he asks, "to come in, and unsettle the minds of the peasants, and to withdraw men from their proper pastors? Why do they not ask leave of the pastors to address their people? If that is refused, they have discharged their consciences. Let them either shew their letters of human commission, or give proofs of a divine one, by working miracles." He would have the people instructed concerning the necessity and the proofs of a call to exercise the office of teachers. "The difficulty," he observes, "is sufficiently great for them that are duly called, to set forth the true doctrine: what is to be hoped for from those who are not called? I would not for all the world want my proper vocation as a teacher. Without it, I should despair under the burdens which press upon me. But now God and all the world are witnesses, that, by the grace of God, I have publicly discharged the duties which my office as a teacher and preacher requires of me."—Some of these sentiments will not obtain, perhaps are not fully entitled to, universal concurrence: yet they deserve to be considered. They may tend to check the rashness of some who boldly "rush," where wiser and holier men "fear to tread;" and to impress on others more serious

sentiments, than they have been used to entertain, on the subject of undertaking to instruct men in "things pertaining to God." And, whatever may be determined concerning those who have the authority of sending forth teachers, surely no sober mind will think, that a man's own forwardness to assume the office is his sufficient warrant.

CHAPTER XIX.

Erasmus on Concord in the Church—Persecutions—Reformation extended—Anabaptists of Munster—Henry VIII and Francis I—Pope's Commission for Reformation—Roman-catholic league—Convention of Francfort.

FRUITLESS negotiations for the convocation of a general council, and artful intrigues to avoid it, occupied several years which follow. The details would be wholly uninteresting, and they may be almost passed over in silence. Clement VII, while he professed his desire of a council, persevered to the end of his life in propositions which he knew would delay, if not finally prevent it. His death took place in the year 1534. His successor Paul III, (of the house of Farnese,) though, having witnessed "the universal censure which Clement had incurred by his obstinacy, he hoped to avoid the same reproach by the seeming alacrity with which he proposed a council, yet flattered himself that such difficulties would arise concerning the time and place of meeting, the persons who had a right to be present, and the order of their proceedings, as would effectually defeat the intention of those who demanded it."¹

Soon after the pacification of Nuremberg, while

¹ Robertson.

public expectation was pretty strongly directed to this object, Erasmus again rendered himself conspicuous in the affairs of the church. In a commentary on the eighty-fourth Psalm, he published his thoughts on Concord in Religion. His performance appears to be precisely one of those works, which from time to time come forth in periods of conflict, and which, assuming to occupy the high ground of impartial decision between contending parties, really do great injustice to one or the other of them, and commonly to that which is esteemed the weaker and more obnoxious. Works of this kind often proceed either from men of ambitious policy, who seek to commend themselves to such as are able to advance them, and are at the same time persons of professed, perhaps of real, moderation; or from men who, attempting little themselves, affect the praise of superior wisdom by censuring those who are doing great practical good, though not without that mixture of error and infirmity which is incident to human nature. Such men often avail themselves of the important truths, which the very objects of their censure have brought into public notice, propound them as their own, and are severe on the extravagances with which, as they pretend, the others have deformed and oppressed them.

In the part of his work with which we are concerned, after some general advice, very good indeed, but get very bootless—such as, that all orders of men, popes, princes, magistrates, monks, priests, people, should aim to become what they ought to be, and to discharge their several duties in an exemplary manner—Erasmus comes to some particular points of doctrine. On these, many of his statements are, abstractedly considered, sound and good; yet as proposed by him they are injurious, because they imply that Luther and his friends had deviated widely from them; whereas it might, with much appearance of truth be affirmed, that Erasmus himself had learned them

from Luther. At least it is probable Erasmus would never have written or thought as he here does, had it not been for Luther: and his positions, advanced in the manner that many of them are, are proofs of the extent to which Luther had prevailed in his attacks upon long-established error. Seckendorf remarks, that many of his sentiments "might have been expressed, and nearly in the same words, from Luther himself; while the sentences, which Erasmus selected for censure, were not Luther's, but were calumniously imputed to him."

Passing to another class of topics, Erasmus thinks it "*pious* to believe, that the prayers and good works of the living profit the dead, especially if they had made provision for these services in their lifetime. But let not those," he says, "who cannot believe this, rave against the simplicity of others, but only be the more zealous of good works themselves." In like manner of the invocation of the saints he argues, that "those persons must still be supposed to retain power with God after death, at whose instance, and through whose instrumentality, he wrought miracles while they lived." "Superstition, indeed, is to be reproved, but simple affection or regard of this kind is to be borne with, even though it be joined with some degree of error."—Thus does he palliate dominant evils, which he cannot defend, and call that *simplicity* and *pious affection*, which he cannot but feel to be superstitious and dangerous, if not even absolutely idolatrous: and thus does he, in effect, become the apologist of those who were the bitter enemies of all real reformation. And, while he softens down, and puts a favourable construction on the gross errors and corrupt practices of the ruling party, he applies harsh terms to the opposition made to those corruptions and errors by the other side. "Let them not rave against the simplicity of others." "Let them worship the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit themselves, and not with dis-

gusting officiousness disturb those, who without superstition implore the intercession of the saints." Such are the terms applied to the only men who were likely to correct the prevailing evils.

Again, with regard to image-worship, he says: "The zeal of those who rage against images is not, in my opinion, altogether without reason, though it is excessive: for idolatry, or the worship of images, of which there is still danger, is a horrible crime." Yet he talks of pictures and statues as being "a more vivid kind of poetry;" "and, as Plato would not banish all poetry from his republic, but only that which conveyed unworthy notions of the gods, so," he says, "whatever superstition has crept in by means of images ought to be corrected, and yet their proper use preserved. Let those therefore, who think that no honour is to be paid to the images of the saints, enjoy their own opinion, but let them not rail at others who, without superstition, so venerate images, from love to the characters represented by them, as a wife may kiss the ring or the girdle of her absent husband!" What principle is there so sacred, that may not be compromised and frittered away by fallacious representations like these? Justly indeed does Jortin remark, that, if none had arisen to do more than Erasmus would have done, we might have been involved in all the delusion and superstition of popery to this day.

In like manner with respect to the veneration of relics, he thinks "Paul would have allowed every man his own opinion on such subjects." Preposterous as the sentiment is, was such the plan of the Romish church, to allow men their own opinion on *any* subject?

Having treated some other topics in a similar manner, passing over however several questions of great importance, he concludes with a flattering encomium of the moderation and conciliatory mind of the emperor, of Ferdinand, of the kings of France

and England, and of the pope; and says all would be well, if "*other* princes and states" would direct their attention a right way. Thus he insinuates that the real obstacles to peace were on the side of the protestants: whereas their opponents, though they might be glad to avail themselves of Erasmus's name in the controversy, would no more have admitted of *his* modifications than of *their* changes.

The divines of Strasburg appear to have received this work of Erasmus with more favour than it deserved; for they translated it into German, and dispersed it pretty widely. This drew from Musculus, formerly of their city but now of Augsburg, an expostulation in a letter to Bucer. "I fear," he says, "lest, through an excessive and morbid desire of concord, you should tamper with the truth that has been taught and acknowledged among you: which God prevent!" "We know with whom we have to enter into concord; men who have not repented of their abominable doctrine and manner of life, so as to depart from it even a hair's breadth. Accursed be that concord which cannot be established but at the expense of truth and of Christ's kingdom!" "Erasmus," he observes, "bends all his force to shew, that there is no salvation out of the unity of the church." This, as applied to an external church, Musculus reprobates; and admits it only of the spiritual church, or body of Christ, of which we are constituted members by a lively faith.

Corvinus, also, a Hessian divine, wrote an answer to Erasmus's treatise, which Luther highly commended in a preface. Luther here speaks charitably of Erasmus, and allows that he and his followers meant well; but the terms of agreement, which they proposed, could not, he said, be admitted with a safe conscience. He contrasts the conduct of himself and his friends with that of their opponents. "We have always been ready to yield and to suffer whatever

could be granted or endured without violating our faith. Never have we thirsted after their blood, much less shed it. We have strenuously supported them against the seditious and fanatical spirits; on which account those furious persons abhor the Lutherans more than they do the papists; while the latter cease not to shed our blood, and to pursue us with fire and sword, and every species of cruelty." "The union of charity," he says, "we have sought with our whole souls; but the union of faith or doctrine between us is in vain sought by Erasmus through the medium of mutual concession; for, so far from conceding any thing whatever, our adversaries have even exacted things which, before Luther arose, they had themselves condemned. Their whole cry is, 'The church, The church;' and they give that name to impious men, who presume to think and determine above the scriptures, and contrary to the scriptures, and that (as they pretend,) by divine authority! And Erasmus confirms their error, by every where promising to follow the church, and considering every thing as doubtful and undetermined till the church has decided it. If this be right, we have only to say, 'I believe that the papists are the church, and that whatever they determine is the truth;' and thus we shall all be safe!"

As this is the last time that our attention will be directly called to Erasmus, we may here state, that he died three years afterwards, in July, 1536, at Basle, aged about seventy years; having exhibited, says Seckendorf, "many indications of piety near the end of his life." On his death-bed, he made honourable mention of Bullinger, the reformer, and received with kindness Conrad Pellican of Zurich, with whom he had previously had sharp contentions; and he asked Pellican's forgiveness of any offence he might have given him.

The persecutions of the duke George of Saxony

at this time were severe and extensive. He banished nearly eight hundred inhabitants of Leipzig, on account of their attachment to the doctrines of Luther. Still greater severities were exercised in Misnia against such as presumed to eat forbidden meats, to frequent any other than their parish churches, or to receive the sacrament otherwise than the papal ritual prescribed. Priests guilty of such offences were subjected to torture : others were sentenced to perpetual imprisonment, or died of want, or from the stench of the places in which they were confined : and these were buried by the hangman, or other base officer, in waste ground where the dead bodies of unclean animals were cast. Some were sent into exile, with merely a cloth thrown over them, having in it a rent, through which their heads were passed : “ and this,” says the narrator,¹ “ I myself have seen at Dresden.”

Yet all George's severities could not prevent the progress of protestant principles, even among his ministers and his own near relatives. On these grounds Anthony á Schönberg, a man of high family, and brother to a cardinal, forfeited the duke's favour, and incurred persecution from him. Others of the same family manifested similar sentiments, particularly Ernest, who had commanded the duke's troops in the rustic war, and had himself been very tenacious of the established rites. When death approached, he wrote to George, requesting that he would permit him “ to receive Christ's testament as Christ had himself appointed, namely, entire in both its parts ;” and, not being able to prevail for such indulgence, he made application to the elector, to send him a pious and learned minister to instruct him, and administer the sacrament to him. This was accordingly done.—George's daughter-in-law also, Elizabeth, sister to the landgrave of Hesse, con-

¹ Fabricius, Orig. Sax.

ceived such scruples, as made her refuse to receive the sacrament according to the papal usage.

Indeed the extension of the reformation at this period was rapid. "The religious truce concluded at Nuremberg," says Mosheim, "inspired with new vigour and resolution the friends of the reformation. It gave strength to the feeble, and perseverance to the bold. Encouraged by it, those, who had hitherto been only secret enemies to the Roman pontiff, spurned now his yoke publicly, and refused to submit to his imperious jurisdiction. This appears from the various cities and provinces in Germany, which about this time boldly enlisted themselves under the standard of Luther."

The elector of Saxony, at the instance of the states under his jurisdiction, early availed himself of the confidence inspired by the pacification, to complete that ecclesiastical visitation of his dominions, by commissioners, partly lay and partly clerical, which had been begun some years before,¹ but never finished. This appears to have been very conducive to the interests of religion, by the removal of scandalous priests, the rooting out of the remains of superstition, the promoting of sound instruction, both among youth and persons of mature age, the making provision for the preservation of ecclesiastical edifices, and for the maintenance of the clergy. On this occasion also the reformation was first extended to the seventy parishes of Swartzburg in Thuringia, and to some places not immediately under the elector's authority, particularly in Voightland in Misnia.

Three years afterwards, the same pious prince materially augmented the endowment of the university of Wittemberg; on which occasion he thankfully acknowledges what God had wrought by means of that institution, and especially through the instrumentality of Luther and Melancthon—"making

¹ Vol. i. p. 388.

manifest," he says, "the true and Christian understanding of his word, to the comfort and salvation of all men."

In the year 1533 a movement took place in the dutchy of Cleves, in Westphalia, from which more perhaps, might at first have been expected than actually followed. The duke John (father of Sibylla, wife to the elector of Saxony, and of Ann, afterwards married to Henry VIII, of England,) issued a long edict, containing very particular directions for the reformation of the church in his dominions. Many of these regulations were excellent; yet many of the superstitious usages of popery were retained with them; very much according to the principles of Erasmus: and its failure of practical effect was a specimen of what was likely to be the result of Erasmus's compromising schemes.

The rays of evangelical truth, it appears, had also penetrated into Italy, and even to the very heart of the papal dominions; and we find at this time a remarkable address in favour of reformation, made by some distinguished citizens of Bologna to John Planitz, the elector's ambassador at the court of the emperor, then held in that city. The design of the address was, to entreat Planitz most seriously to urge the emperor to procure a council, which the authors of the address hoped might lead to some reformation in religion—an object, they say, "most earnestly desired by many pious, learned, and honourable persons in the first cities of Italy, and even in Rome itself." They spoke for themselves in the most unequivocal and, at the same time, in the most humble language. They congratulated the deliverance of Saxony from the tyranny of antichristian superstition, and applauded the elector's zeal for extending the like liberty of the gospel to other countries. They trusted that, at all events, the pope would be so far prevailed upon, that it might no longer be esteemed heretical for either priests or lay-

men to purchase the scriptures, or a proof of Lutheranism to quote sometimes the words of Christ or of S. Paul. This, they say, "is at present the case: and what is the reign of Antichrist, if this is not?" They entreat the ambassador "to leave no means untried, that his mission into Italy might prove not to have been in vain, and that their hopes might not issue in disappointment. For their own part, they promise to contribute their utmost endeavours, even though they should sacrifice their fortunes and their lives in the cause of Christ."

To read such a document as this, proceeding from Italy three hundred years ago, and to reflect that all these hopes and earnest desires were disappointed, the spark thus kindled extinguished, and the dawning light lost in deep and permanent darkness, which endures to this day; and then to compare the lot of some other countries, and particularly of our own highly favoured land—must be deeply affecting to every pious mind. Why has such mercy been extended to us, while it was withheld from other people, though it appears that among them were persons ready to make the most costly sacrifices for the sake of it? "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight!"¹

Another event which very considerably strengthened the cause of the reformation in Germany, about this time, was the restoration of Ulric duke of Würtemberg to his dominions. He had been expelled in the year 1519, on account of his violent and oppressive administration, and the house of Austria had taken possession of his dutchy. His long exile having obliterated the remembrance of his misconduct, which is said to have been the effect rather of inexperience than of tyrannical disposition, he was become the object of general compassion: and, in the year 1534,

¹ Dr. M'Crie has collected extensive and highly interesting notices of the progress of reformed principles in both Italy and Spain. *Hist. of Ref. in Italy* (1827,) and *Spain* (1829).

the landgrave, his near relation, having received aid from the king of France, restored him by force of arms, defeating the troops of Ferdinand, under Philip count Palatine. In this expedition the landgrave was not supported by any of his protestant brethren; and his proceeding was strongly deprecated by Luther and Melancthon: yet its issue and its effects alike surpassed, or even contradicted their expectations.

Previously to the year 1529 Ulric had received impressions in favour of the reformation; and at that time, meeting Luther at the conferences at Marpurg, he conceived a high esteem and admiration for him. Hence his first object on the recovery of his dominions, which were very considerable, was, “to throw them open to the admission of the glory of Christ, and to introduce the preaching of his unadulterated word, and the administration of the sacraments according to his institution. In establishing reformation he had recourse to the assistance of Schnepfius of Marpurg, Blaurer of Constance, Brentius of Halle, in Suabia, and other divines. Ulric further reformed and enriched the university of Tübingen, which had been founded by his ancestors, and procured the assistance of Melancthon, Grynæus, and Camerarius, to draw up proper regulations for its management.

The reformation of Würtemberg was accompanied or followed by that of Brunswick Calenberg, Hanover, Pomerania, and Mecklenburg; and of the cities of Augsburg, Bremen, and Hamburg.—John Bugenhagen was a native of Pomerania, and was one of those who introduced the reformed doctrine into his country. Being constrained to quit his residence there by the reigning duke, he had settled at Wittemberg, where our attention has repeatedly been drawn to him. A favourable change afterwards took place, and in the year 1534 Bugenhagen was invited, with Paulus à Rhoda, from Stettin, to join in organizing and establishing the reformation. In 1536

the two dukes were admitted into the protestant league.

At Augsburg, the senate having prohibited the popish worship in all the churches except the cathedral, the priests quitted the city: on which reformed preachers were universally established in a city whence a few years before the decree had issued that was to suppress protestantism.

The reformation in the city of Nordlingen in Suabia was carried on with extraordinary success. As early as the year 1522, Theobald Billicanus had been called to the office of preacher there, by the senate, who had obtained the right of patronage; and two years after, the reformed state of the city of Nuremberg being reported to them, they requested Billicanus to conform things at Nordlingen to the same model: and “with such mighty influence of the Holy Spirit, and such forcible eloquence” did he proceed in his work, that the evangelical doctrine was universally received, and, “with the exception of the stewards of certain abbots, who held estates there, not a professed papist remained in the city.”

Even in Austria, as we have seen was also the case in Italy itself, considerable inclination towards reformation in religion was manifested. Pallavicini relates, that, when Aleander was sent legate from Paul III. to Ferdinand, he found “in the very entrance of Germany,” (the Austrian provinces appear to be meant,) “as many as fifteen hundred cures vacant, through the scarcity of catholic priests.” The historian attributes this to various inferior causes; but a more true reason appears to have been the wide dissemination of evangelical doctrine, and the desire for it excited even among the subjects of the countries most under the influence of Rome.

Some notice is taken in the former volume¹ of the reformation in Denmark, commenced under Chris-

¹ Vol. i. p. 231—233.

tiern II, and carried on under his successor Frederic. It was much opposed by the bishops and clergy. In 1527, Frederic assembled the senate of the kingdom at Odensee, and expressed his purposes to them in unequivocal and determined language. He told them, that it was well known what ignorance, superstition, and absurdity had passed under the sacred name of religion; that the Lutheran doctrine and worship had now taken root in the kingdom, so that they could not be eradicated without the danger of public ruin; and he pointed out to them the course proper to be adopted under existing circumstances. The senate concurred with him, and came to the resolution, "That no man should be disturbed for matters of conscience; but that both the Roman-catholic and the Lutheran religion should be freely exercised, till a council should decide the questions at issue." Three years afterwards, articles and counter-articles were exhibited to the senate by the two parties, but the former resolutions were adhered to: and the divines, George John, John Tausson, and Christian Shrock were encouraged in preaching the reformed doctrine. In 1531, the king acceded to the Smalkaldic league. He died two years afterwards, and great disorders ensued. The clergy endeavoured to prevent the succession of his eldest son, Christiern, because of his known attachment to protestantism, and set up his younger brother against him—a mere child, whom they intended to educate in the Romish faith; while some of the people proposed to restore the exiled, and now imprisoned monarch, Christiern II. Christiern III. however prevailed. He imprisoned, and afterwards publicly accused of treasonable practices, all the seven bishops of the kingdom. They were deprived, and episcopacy, as it had hitherto existed, with powers and revenues that rendered it highly formidable to the crown itself, was abolished. Bugenhagen, who was invited from Wittemberg, placed the crown upon the king's head, drew up for the king-

dom a scheme of ecclesiastical order, and ordained seven superintendents in the room of the deposed bishops. These superintendents were, indeed, still commonly denominated bishops; but they held no courts, and possessed no temporal power or præeminence. This change (which was completed in 1539,) is said to have been greater than Luther approved, as it certainly was greater than would have been contemplated, but for the violent proceedings of the bishops themselves.—Bugenhagen however reported, “that he never found greater desire of hearing the word of God, than in Denmark: that the people assembled on ordinary days, in the winter season, before it was light, and on holidays they had religious services throughout the day.”

From these notices of the progress of the reformation, we may proceed to some other miscellaneous topics.

The year 1534 was distinguished by one of the most extraordinary bursts of fanatical extravagance and fury, that ever disgraced the history of mankind. A body of anabaptists seized the imperial city of Munster, and fortified themselves in it. They made John Boccold, a journeyman tailor, commonly called John of Leyden, their king; who was to become “the monarch of the earth,” and to march forth for the destruction of all other kings and rulers, “giving quarter to none but the multitude, who were lovers of justice.” They retained possession of the city considerably more than a year, promulgating the wildest principles, and indulging in the most outrageous practices: and it was not without a confederacy of the German princes against them, under the leading of the bishop of Munster, that the city was at length reduced, and the insurgents suppressed.

About this period, and especially in the years 1535 and 1539, much communication took place between the court of England and the German protestants.

Mutual letters and embassies passed; and Henry VIII. corresponded personally, not only with the princes, but also with Melancthon. At the early part of the period, it was an object with him to obtain the sanction of the protestant divines to his divorce from Catharine of Arragon, (the emperor's aunt,) and to check, by means of the protestant princes, the effect of Charles's resentment against him for that measure. He was willing therefore to become the 'defender of the faith' of the Augsburg Confession, with some alterations; for the purpose of arranging which he desired to have commissioners sent over to him, and himself particularly invited Melancthon. The protestants however were shy of him, distrusting his professions in favour of reformation, and being determined to concur in no offensive measures against the emperor, so long as he suffered them to enjoy their religion unmolested.

In the latter of the years above mentioned, Henry promulgated his famous law of the "six articles," establishing, under the penalty of death, the reception of many of the principal tenets and practices of the Romish superstition; after which the elector would scarcely hear of any further communication with him: and, though Bucer withheld his concurrence, Luther, Jonas, Bugenhagen, and Melancthon, on being consulted, pronounced it to be "a new device of Satan, that, when the power of the pope failed, kings should thus take upon them to model religion according to their own fancies;" and advised that Henry should be "let alone, as one who had been sufficiently admonished, and sinned wilfully." Melancthon, whose boldness appears to have risen in proportion to the disappointment which he felt at Henry's conduct, wrote directly to the king himself a long and faithful expostulation.¹

¹ This epistle does Melancthon great honour. With the courtesy and address which were becoming, it combines a high degree of boldness and faithfulness of censure. The measure itself he considers as

The proceedings of the king of France at this period, with respect both to the German protestants, and those within his own dominions, were extraordinary, and apparently very inconsistent. Disappointed of the assistance which he had expected from other quarters, in the war that he was about to commence against the emperor, Francis earnestly solicited the aid of the protestant princes associated by the league of Smalkald. In order to gain their confidence, he affected a wonderful moderation with regard to the religious points in dispute; he permitted Bellay, his envoy in Germany, to explain his sentiments concerning some of the most important articles, in terms not far different from those used by the protestants; and even condescended to invite Melancthon to visit Paris, that by his assistance he might concert the most proper measures for reconciling the contending sects, which so unhappily divided the church. Soon after however he lost the fruits of this disingenuous artifice, by a step very contrary to all these professions, but in some degree forced upon a time-serving monarch, by the prejudices of the age, and the peculiar circumstances in which he was placed.¹

The indiscreet zeal of some of his subjects, who

monstrous, in some points going beyond what had elsewhere been heard of. He doubts not that the bishops were the authors of it; but it was the king's sanction which gave it validity: and all the German protestants lamented that he should become the instrument of other men's cruelty and impiety. How remote was this from the hopes which had been formed of him! The hostility of other princes was now confirmed, the obstinacy of the wicked increased, and old errors of portentous magnitude established, by means of one from whom they had hoped for the very reverse. The writer heard that Latimer and other pious men, true members of Christ, were in bonds for the gospel's sake: he prayed God to give them strength and courage worthy of Christians. Nothing more honourable or blessed could befall them, than to die for the sake of such manifest and important truth, as they maintained against the recent law; but God forbid that the king's hand should be stained with the blood of such men! "Recognize," he says to Henry, "the snare of the devil; stand not among the enemies of Christ, who are stained with idolatry and blood, and on whom God will assuredly execute vengeance."

¹ Robertson.

had imbibed the protestant opinions, and who were irritated at the loss of the liberty which they had enjoyed of disseminating their sentiments, prompted them to affix to the gates of the Louvre, and other public places, papers containing indecent reflections on the doctrines and rites of the popish church. Six of the persons concerned were discovered and seized. "The king, in order to avert the judgments which it was supposed their blasphemies might draw down upon the nation, appointed a solemn procession. The holy sacrament was carried through the city in great pomp; Francis walked uncovered before it, bearing a torch in his hand; the princes of the blood supported the canopy over it; the nobles marched in order behind. In the presence of this numerous assembly, the king declared that, if one of his hands were infected with heresy, he would cut it off with the other, and would not spare even his own children, if found guilty of that crime. As a dreadful proof of his being in earnest, the six unhappy persons were publicly burned before the procession was finished, with circumstances of the most shocking barbarity attending their execution." Nor were these six persons, who were burned while the king himself looked on, the only ones who suffered on this occasion. John Sturmius of Strasburg writes from Paris to Melancthon, that eighteen had been burned either to death, or for torture, and that many others were expecting the like treatment. And Maimbourg, a hundred and fifty years afterwards, styles this "a most just execution!"—The princes of the league of Smalkald, indignant at the cruelty with which their brethren were treated, broke off all further negotiation with the king of France.

The proceedings of the Roman pontiff deserve likewise to be related. Soon after his accession to the papal chair, Paul III. made repeated overtures for a general council. The nature of these proposals, or the circumstances under which they were made,

rendered them all, as might have been foreseen, and as perhaps was intended, abortive.

“That he might not seem to have turned his whole attention towards a reformation by a council, which he was not able to accomplish, while he neglected that which was in his own power,” he next professed to give efficiency to a commission of cardinals and bishops, which he had three years before appointed, “to inquire into the abuses and corruptions of the Roman court, and to propose the most effectual method of removing them. This scrutiny, undertaken with reluctance, was carried on slowly and with remissness. All defects were touched with a gentle hand, afraid of probing too deep, or discovering too much. But even by this partial examination, many irregularities were detected, and many enormities exposed to light, while the remedies, which they suggested as most proper, were either inadequate or were never applied. The report and resolution of these deputies, though intended to be kept secret, were transmitted by some accident into Germany, and, being immediately made public, afforded ample matter for reflection and triumph to the protestants: On the one hand, they demonstrated the necessity of a reformation in the head as well as the members of the church, and even pointed out many of the corruptions against which Luther and his followers had remonstrated with the greatest vehemence. They shewed, on the other hand, that it was vain to expect this reformation from ecclesiastics themselves, who, as Luther strongly expressed it, piddled at curing warts, while they overlooked or confirmed ulcers.”¹

Most of the points adverted to by the pope’s commissioners were little more than of an external kind. None of the corrupt doctrines and principles of the church of Rome, which were the main source of its

¹ Father Paul—Robertson.

great practical errors, and against which accordingly Luther had especially directed the powerful artillery of his vehement declamation and irresistible scriptural arguments, were here touched upon. The reader will be amused to find, among loud complaints made of “ungodly questions bandied about and disputed both in universities and churches, and of mischievous books circulated,” what was the only pernicious work specified: “There is a book commonly read in schools, called *Erasmus's Colloquies*, in which there are many things that may make a dangerous impression on the understandings of young and unwary people, and pervert a floating and unsettled age, which wants a sufficient ballast of principles and gravity to keep it steady. This book therefore, and others of the same kind, must be prohibited in all schools.” Alas! for poor Erasmus, that after all his pains to stand well with popes, and cardinals, and bishops, he should thus have one of his best-known publications placed in this solitary station of “bad eminence,” ere the hand that wrote it was well cold in the grave! His case strikingly teaches us the lesson, how vain it is to think of conciliating ambitious men, and particularly ambitious and political churchmen, by truckling to them in our general conduct, while we cannot make up our minds to go all lengths with them. We must either do this, or be content to lose our characters with such men entirely. To attempt any middle course will only make us much less respected by them, than their open and consistent opponents are.

Nothing was to be expected from a reformation like that proposed by the pope's commissioners. “The tree” itself must be “made good” before its “fruit” could become so. But here even the little which was proposed was never attempted to be carried into execution. The pope referred the report of the commissioners to the consistory of cardinals; where Schönberg, cardinal and archbishop of Capua, “who

was believed to have been deputed by the pope for the purpose," zealously opposed all reformation; urging among other arguments, that "the Lutherans would boast, that they had forced the pope into it;" and also that "the very change would be a confession that the things altered had been justly reprehended by those heretics—which would prove a great abetting of their whole doctrine."¹ The result was, a resolution to proceed no further in the business.

The report of the commissioners being sent into Germany, was presently published there, and was freely animadverted upon both by John Sturmius of Strasburg, and by Luther. "In Luther's book," Sleidan observes, "a man need only look on the cut in the frontispiece, to understand his argument; for the pope is represented sitting upon a high throne, and several of the cardinals about him, who, with foxes' tails tied at the end of poles, are busily employed in brushing away the cobwebs all around!"

With the nuncios whom the pope had despatched into Germany on the subject of a general council, the emperor had deputed his vice-chancellor Heldo, with orders to support the pope's propositions to the utmost. This officer perceiving the advantages that the protestants derived from the league by which they were all united in one firm body, busied himself among the different princes in forming a counter-confederation, which was styled the 'Holy Alliance,' for the support of the Roman-catholic religion. This league was entirely uncalled for, since none could pretend that the professors of that religion were exposed to the same danger that the protestants were: and accordingly it obtained but few subscribers. The archbishops of Mentz and Salzburg, (the former, however, only in his character of archbishop of Mag-

¹ F. Paul.

deburg,) William and Lewis, dukes of Bavaria, George, duke of Saxony, and Eric and Henry, dukes of Brunswick, (of whom Henry had now become the great instigator of all measures against the protestants,) were the only persons that acceded to it.

This league was to have remained a profound secret: but the rumour of it soon got abroad, and was confirmed by some intercepted letters from Henry of Brunswick to Heldo and the archbishop of Mentz. This, added to other unsatisfactory and suspicious circumstances, excited great alarm in the minds of the protestants. They were ready to imagine that the emperor was about to put in execution some formidable plan for their extirpation, or at least for the suppression of their opinions and their religious liberties. They therefore held frequent meetings, and were proposing to raise the contingents of men and money which their league obliged them respectively to furnish.

“ It was not long, however, before they were convinced that their apprehensions were without foundation, and that the emperor, to whom repose was absolutely necessary after efforts so much beyond his strength in the war with France, had no thoughts of disturbing the tranquillity of Germany. As a proof of this, at an interview with the protestant princes in Francfort, his ambassadors agreed, that all concessions in their favour, particularly those contained in the pacification of Nuremberg, should continue in force for fifteen months; that during this period all proceedings of the imperial chamber against them should be suspended; that a conference should be held by a few divines of each party, in order to discuss the points in controversy, and to propose articles of accommodation which should be laid before the next diet. Though the emperor, that he might not irritate the pope, who remonstrated against the first part of this agreement as impolitic, and against the latter as an impious encroachment

upon his prerogative, never formally ratified this convention, it was observed with considerable exactness, and greatly strengthened the basis of that ecclesiastical liberty, for which the protestants contended." ¹

With the "Convention of Francfort," thus made on the 19th of April, 1539, we close the present chapter; referring to the ensuing one several particulars, most of them relating to Luther himself, which fall within the same period.

¹ Robertson.

CHAPTER XX.

Luther's Interview with Vergerio—Concord of Wittemberg—Ecclesiastical Funds—Luther's Illness and Prayer—Character of Popery—Luther's alleged conference with Satan—His Writings.

AMONG the agents whom the pope sent into Germany on the subject of a council, Peter Paul Vergerio, subsequently bishop of Capo d' Istria, who had also been nuncio to king Ferdinand at the period of the diet of Augsburg, held an eminent place. This person eventually became a protestant, and was himself subjected to persecution for his religion; and in that view he will hereafter claim our attention; but at present he was a willing instrument of the pope's insincere and artful proceedings. He was chiefly distinguished for skill in the civil and canon law. Among other things, he was instructed to endeavour, if possible, to bring over Luther and Melancthon, or any other of the more eminent protestant divines. Accordingly, on his arrival at Wittemberg, he sent for Luther. Very different accounts are given of their interview: but that delivered by Father Paul, and that inserted in Luther's German works, though independent documents, mutually corroborate each other.

The latter document, which is written in a somewhat sportive style, states that Vergerio came to Wittemberg on the evening of November 6, 1535,

with a splendid retinue, and was conducted to the castle with all due honour by the provincial governor. The next morning Luther sent for his barber at an early hour, and told him, he was summoned to attend the nuncio of his holiness the pope, and he would by no means go in dishabille, for he wished to look young, that his enemies might think he had a long time yet to live. He then put on his best suit, and a golden ornament (a present from the elector,) about his neck, and remarked, when his attendant expressed some surprise, "This is the way in which we must deal with these foxes and serpents." Then getting into a chariot which had been sent for him from the castle, accompanied by Bugenhagen, he said, "Here go the pope of Germany and cardinal Pomeranus!" Being introduced, he conversed with the nuncio, among other things, on the subject of the council. He said, it was not seriously proposed; the pope did but play with them: and, if it were held, it would busy itself only about trifles, such as tonsures and vestments, and not upon faith, and justification, and the bringing of Christians to the unity of the spirit and of doctrine—for this would not suit their purpose. He added, that he and his friends felt such assurance of what they believed, as not to need the determination of a council; though others might do it, who groaned under the oppression of men who did not themselves know what they believed. "But," said he, "call your council; God willing, I will attend it, though I should be burned by it." Vergerio asked where he would have it held. "Where you please," he replied; "at Mantua, at Padua, at Florence, or any where else." Vergerio asked, was he willing it should be at Bologna? He inquired to whom that city then belonged; and on being told, "To the pope;" "Gracious heaven," he exclaimed, "has the pope seized that place too? Well, I will come even thither."—The nuncio, in a courtierlike manner, said something of the pope's visiting Wittenberg. "Let

him come," said Luther; "we shall be glad to see him." "But," said Vergerio, "would you have him come with an army, or unattended?" "As he pleases," replied Luther; "we shall be ready for him either way." The nuncio then inquired whether the ministers in Saxony were consecrated. Luther replied, "Certainly: as the pope will not consecrate them for us, here sits a bishop," (pointing to Bugenhagen,) "whom we have consecrated."—"Much more conversation," says the author of the narrative, "passed between them, in which Luther fully explained his views, with the utmost freedom, and even, where the case required, with sharpness of remark." On his taking leave, Vergerio said, "See that you be ready for the council." "I will come," replied Luther, "with my life in my hand."

The reformer, according to this narrative, was perfectly at his ease, and assumed the superior ground; which of right belonged to him in every respect except that of external rank.—It may be observed, that Luther seems never to have concerned himself, so much as many did, in what place the council should be held: the one great point with him was, that the scriptures alone should be the rule of judgment.

Father Paul's account of this interview is more copious, and delivered in a more serious style. It is in substance as follows.

"Vergerio treated with Luther very courteously, enlarging much on the council and other topics. He assured him that the pope and cardinals respected him highly, and were infinitely grieved for the loss of one, who, had he employed himself in the cause of God and of the apostolical see, might have done them inestimable service: that the pope blamed the harshness of Cajetan and the severity of Leo in their dealings with him: that for himself, (the nuncio,) as he did not profess divinity, he would not dispute with him on the existing controversies, but that by

common reason he could shew him, that it would be advantageous to reunite himself with the head of the church; for that, seeing his religion, which had come to light only eighteen years before, had raised innumerable sects and popular seditions, attended with the death or banishment of great numbers, it could not be concluded that it came from God: that it demonstrated too blind a self-love for a man to trouble the whole world in order to disseminate his own opinions: that, if he could not but adopt them, it was sufficient for his own conscience and salvation to keep them to himself: that the confusion produced had become so great, that a remedy could no longer be deferred, and that it was in Luther's power to make it easy, if he would be present at the council, and treat with charity, and oblige the pope—who was a munificent prince, and took special notice of persons of merit. Æneas Sylvius, he further observed, by following his own opinions, with incessant toil, could rise no higher than to be canon of Trent; but, being changed to a better mind, became a bishop, a cardinal, and finally pope Pius II; and that cardinal Bessarion's advancement had fallen little short of this.—Luther in reply told him, that he made no account of the estimation in which he was held by the court of Rome, whose hatred he feared not, nor desired their favour: that he declined no labour in the ministry of God's word, though he was but an unprofitable servant: that he could see no more affinity between the service of Christ and that of the papacy, than between light and darkness: that nothing in his whole life had been more serviceable to him than the severity of Leo and the harshness of Cajetan; so that he could not ascribe their conduct to themselves, but to the providence of God; for that, not being at that time enlightened in the great system of Christian truth, but having only discovered certain abuses in the matter of indulgences, he should easily have been prevailed upon to be silent, if only his

adversaries would have observed the same condition ; but that the writings of Prierias, the haughtiness of Cajetan, and the violence of Leo drove him to investigate the whole subject, and thus to discover errors and abuses, more numerous and more intolerable ; such as a man could not conceal with a safe conscience : that the nuncio had ingenuously confessed, that he was not conversant in theology, which indeed appeared from the arguments he used ; for that none could call the doctrine of the reformers new, unless he believed that Christ, the apostles, and the holy fathers governed their lives by such rules as the pope, the cardinals, and the bishops now did : nor could any argument be drawn against the doctrine from the discords in Germany, except by one little acquainted with the scriptures, and not aware that it is the peculiar mark of the word of God and the gospel of Christ, that where it is preached in the world it occasions troubles and tumults, even to the setting of the son against the father, and the father against the son ; and that its effect is, to give life to them that obey it, but to increase condemnation to them that reject it : that it was a great fault of the Romanists, to support the church of Christ, as if it were a temporal state, by human sanctions : that this is that kind of wisdom which S. Paul calls ‘ foolishness with God ; ’ whereas to disregard those political considerations by which the Romish hierarchy is conducted, to trust the promises of God, and to refer the interests of the church to his divine management, is that folly of men which is wisdom with God ; that it was not in the power of Martin to make the council succeed, and prove profitable to the church ; it rather depended on the pope’s leaving it free, that the Spirit of God alone might rule and preside in it ; and that, all interests, usurpations, and artifices of men being excluded, the holy scriptures might be the sole standard by which every thing should be decided : that, if it were so conducted, he, for his part, would

carry with him thither all possible sincerity and Christian charity—not for the purpose of pleasing the pope or any human being, but of promoting the glory of Christ, and establishing the peace and liberty of the church: but that so great a blessing to the Christian world could not be hoped for, unless all hypocrisy were laid aside, and the wrath of God against their sins appeased by serious repentance: that the assembling together of men, ever so learned, was but a weak resource for this great work; seeing that, so long as the wrath of God is kindled, there is no error so absurd to which the grand enemy of mankind cannot persuade those great learned men, who trust in their own wisdom and knowledge—for it pleases God ‘to confound the wisdom of the wise:’ that he could receive nothing from the court of Rome compatible with the ministry of the gospel: that the examples of Æneas Sylvius and Bessarion moved him not at all; the twinkling splendour of worldly greatness having no attractions for him; but that, if he were inclined to boast himself, he might adopt the facetious remark of Erasmus, ‘that poor and despised Luther made many rich and great:’ that he need not go far to prove this; as the nuncio himself knew that, only in the month of May last, the advancement of Fisher, bishop of Rochester, to the cardinalate was greatly owing, and that of Schönberg entirely owing to him.”—“Vergerio therefore,” proceeds Father Paul, “could gain nothing from Luther, who maintained his wonted magnanimity, and held fast his doctrine as firmly as if it had been the object of vision to his bodily eyes; openly avowing that the pope and the nuncio should sooner embrace his doctrine, than he would surrender it.”

This relation excites the indignation of Pallavicini and Maimbourg, who roundly charge the great author, who delivers it, with fiction and falsehood. In support of the charge Pallavicini quotes Vergerio’s letters to Rome, in which he says that he

“only saw Luther at dinner, just before he left Wittemberg; that Luther talked of indifferent matters, and in a very mean style, answering only by monosyllables; and that he appeared to him to be distinguished by nothing but impudence and malice.” Such a report of the poverty and meanness of Luther’s conversation is in itself utterly incredible. The account is also not very consistent with itself, for wherein was he to shew his “impudence and malice,” if he talked merely “of indifferent matters,” and “answered only by monosyllables?” And indeed Maimbourg himself, who quotes it, betrays a suspicion that it might have been framed to suit the wishes of those to whom it was addressed: “Especially,” he says, “if the nuncio was conscious of having imbibed some taint of the heresy which he afterwards avowed, he would write in this way concerning an interview with Luther.”¹

The lamentable sacramental controversy, which permanently divided the friends of the reformation, has already been repeatedly noticed.² We may here add, that, under the auspices of Bucer, who was ever intent upon healing the division, and, for that desirable object, sometimes perhaps had recourse to nice refinements beyond what was consistent with perfect “simplicity and godly sincerity,” a union was at length effected between certain of the parties litigant. This was called the Concord of Wittem-

¹ Melancthon in one of his epistles adverts to this interview, and says, “Luther conversed with Vergerio very freely on the Romish tyranny.” It may be proper however to add, that Bayle, who in his Dictionary, under the article *Luther*, has mainly employed himself in examining and exposing the many calumnies propagated against the reformer, thinks he finds reason to doubt the authenticity of Father Paul’s account, particularly in what relates to his orders to gain over some of the leading reformers.—Even if we suppose that great author on this occasion to have indulged his imagination, his inventions will still shew us what he thought to be probable, and consonant to the character of the two parties respectively.

² Vol. i. p. 249, 332, 402.

berg, and took place in the year 1536. It was here conceded to Luther, "That the body and blood of Christ are *truly* and *substantially* present in the eucharist and that they are received, with the bread and wine, equally by the worthy and the unworthy communicant"—for the latter position, no less than the former, was considered as essential to his doctrine. The Swiss however could never be brought to consent to these propositions: but the divines and churches of Strasburg and other places in Upper Germany,¹ which had before inclined to the sentiments of the Helvetic church, now retired from its communion, and joined themselves by a public act to that of Luther; a circumstance which gave abundant satisfaction to that reformer. Those however who believe, with the church of England, that "the body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten in the supper, only after a heavenly and spiritual manner;" and that "the mean, whereby the body of Christ is received and eaten in the supper, is faith;" will think the following little anecdote, connected with the event, as interesting as any part of the proceedings. "On the day that Bucer preached at Wittemberg, Luther invited him to supper, and, after commending his sermon, observed however that 'he could preach better than Bucer.' Bucer courteously assented, saying that 'by universal consent that praise belonged to Luther.' Luther then speaking seriously, said, 'Do not think that I am vainly boasting: I am conscious of my own slender stores; nor could I preach so ingenious and learned a sermon as you have done to day: but my practice is this; when I mount the pulpit, I consider what is the character of my hearers, most of whom are rude and uninstructed people—almost Goths and Vandals—and I preach to them what I think they can understand: but you rise aloft, and soar into the clouds; so that

¹ Strasburg was at that time, and for a hundred and fifty years after, a German city.

your sermons suit the learned, but are unintelligible to our plain people. I endeavour to copy the mother, who thinks her child better fed with the simple milk of the breast, than with the most costly confections.’”

Luther has a remarkable sentence, written about this time, concerning the mass. “This article,” he says, “will be made a main point with the council: though they should allow us all the rest, they will not yield a hair’s breadth here. Campeggio said at Augsburg, that he would be torn limb from limb rather than consent to abolish the mass. And I (subjoins Luther,) would rather be burned to ashes than put an administrator of the mass, with the service which he performs, on a footing with Christ”—namely, by making his offering “a sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead.” “We shall therefore eternally differ on this point: and with the mass the papacy itself will stand or fall.”

To a full assembly of the protestant princes and states at this time held at Smalkald, an application was made from their divines generally, for a provision to be made, out of the ecclesiastical funds, for a triple object—the maintenance of the clergy, the education of youth, and the support of hospitals for the aged and infirm poor. This had been done in some places, but was felt to be very necessary in all. And, as the appropriation of the funds in question, was a subject on which the protestants were perpetually assailed by their enemies, and much harassed by the imperial chamber, an abstract of their answer to this application may shew the principles on which they acted, and constantly maintained that they were fully justified in acting, with respect to them. After considering the petition, the princes and deputies resolve—“Seeing that the persons, who call themselves ecclesiastical prelates and ministers, adhere to the dogmas and ceremonies of the papacy, and will not agree with us in religion; and that thus

monasteries, collegiate churches, and other institutions have come, or are likely to come into our hands; we unanimously resolve to place over the parishes, within our respective jurisdictions, learned, virtuous and pious pastors, preachers, and ministers, and to provide from the ecclesiastical funds for the sufficient and respectable support of them and their families, according to the situations which they may occupy. We will appoint also superintendents of the pastors and ministers, to watch over their lives and doctrine. And, that there never may be wanting in our churches a succession of Christian pastors and ministers, we will establish schools, or support those already established, within our respective jurisdictions, for the training of youth in sound learning and virtuous manners. We will also appoint stipends for poorer scholars, especially such as may apply themselves to the study of the holy scriptures and divine knowledge. We will erect and endow hospitals for the poor of either sex: in order that all may be done, where it has not been done already, which can be expected in this behalf from Christian princes and magistrates." And this regulation, Seckendorf informs us, though repeatedly reconsidered, was never afterwards rescinded or even altered; so that, if any acted not up to it, it was their own private fault, and contrary to the engagement which they had made. And who shall deny that it was infinitely better, and more becoming Christian rulers; and even more agreeable to the original design of these funds, to make such a use of them, than to suffer them to be applied to perpetuate the superstitions and vices of popery among the people? The protestants were never backward to meet the question of the propriety of their decision on this subject. They constantly maintained, that, in thus appropriating these revenues, they fulfilled the duty of faithful trustees, according to the light which by the good providence of God now shone upon

them, and as both the wishes and the interests of their subjects required.¹

In carrying these measures into effect, it is to be observed, the present possessors were allowed to retain their emoluments for life, if they chose to stay in their places, and act as peaceable citizens: but, if they withdrew from the country, they forfeited their advantages. Such is the substance of the information afforded by the best historians upon this subject: and it surely tends strongly to repel the charges so liberally brought against the reformers of alluring the princes, and against the princes of being allured, by the prospect of plundering the wealth of the church, to favour the reformation.

While attending the meeting at Smalkald, Luther suffered a very severe and dangerous illness, arising from a topical complaint.² At his own earnest entreaty therefore he was removed from Smalkald on the 26th of February; and, beyond all expectation, his first day's journey homeward so relieved him, that he wrote his wife word that he felt himself "quite a new man." But he tells her, that "for eight days together he had had neither ease nor sleep, and had rejected all nourishment. In short," he says, "I was a dead man, and had committed you and my children to God and to our kind prince. I felt much for you, but had no hope of seeing you again. Such urgent prayers however were offered for me, and so many tears shed, that I am relieved."—His illness produced a deep sensation among the parties assembled at Smalkald; and, when the elector was informed of the relief he had found, he wrote immediately to him, expressing the joy he felt, and that he had caused

¹ When funds have been appropriated to public purposes which are no longer held to be useful, the law places the disposal of them in the crown.—*Lord Eldon*.

² "Octo diebus obstructo urinæ meatu." "A prima dominica (18 Feb.) ad alteram usque, nullam lotii guttam emittere potui."

public thanks to be returned to Almighty God.—Within the week however, at Gotha, he suffered a relapse; and in consequence prepared for death. He communicated to Bugenhagen, who accompanied him, his last wishes. He told him, that he knew he had done rightly, and thanked God for what he had been led to do, in attacking the papacy, which was the enemy of God, of Christ, and of his gospel. He sent his remembrances to Melancthon, Jonas, and Cruciger; asking their pardon for any thing in which he might have offended them. He sent his salutations to the deacons and the citizens of Wittenberg, acknowledging their kindness to him. “Charge the princes also,” he said, “in my name, confiding in God, to do boldly whatever the Holy Spirit shall direct them to in the cause of the gospel: the particular measures I do not prescribe to them. May the God of mercy strengthen them to hold fast the sound doctrine which they have received, and fill them with thankfulness for their deliverance from Antichrist. I have earnestly recommended them to God in my prayers; and I trust that he will preserve them, imperfect though they be, from yielding again to the papal impiety.” “Finally,” he said, “my soul I commend to the hands of my Father, and my Lord Jesus Christ, whom I have preached and confessed on earth.”—It pleased God however that, through the skill and attention of the physician, George Sturzius, who accompanied him, he recovered.

On leaving Smalkald, Luther let fall an expression, which being reported abroad called forth the virulent animadversions of his enemies. Looking back on the city, where all the protestant powers were assembled, he exclaimed, “May God fill you with hatred of the pope!” The sentence indeed sounds harsh, especially in the form of a prayer: but we may fairly ask, What was there in it so much to be condemned? It surely need not be said, that

neither in this, nor in other instances which have been adduced against him, did Luther intend any thing like personal hostility to the individual who filled the papal chair, or to any other individual whatever: he referred to that antichristian system, of which the pope is the official head and representative, and to that only. And does either piety or charity require us to keep any measures with that system itself, abstractedly considered? a system which, laying hold of God's best gift to the human race, the religion of Jesus Christ, converted it, through successive centuries, into the very reverse of all for which it was designed; making it the instrument of darkness instead of light, of impurity instead of holiness, of tyranny, both spiritual and civil, instead of freedom, and even of renewed idolatry instead of the pure and spiritual worship, which was to have subverted superstition and banished all false religion from among men. Surely, in consistence with the most perfect good will even to its votaries, we may desire to see such a system "consumed by the spirit of the Lord's mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of his coming."¹ Yes, whatever indulgence we may extend to the professors of the Roman-catholic religion, (and let them have every indulgence, every privilege that they can enjoy consistently with the common safety,) yet let us never forget what popery was, and is essentially in itself, and what it will ever shew itself to be in proportion as it is enabled to act freely, and display its true character. It is one of the fashionable and threatening errors of the present day, that, in our zeal to shew ourselves candid, and indulgent, and liberal towards Roman catholics, we are apt to soften down and lose sight of the enormities, doctrinal and practical, of the papal system. Here we are in danger of realizing the observation of the poet:

¹ 2 Thess. ii.

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen,
Yet, seen too oft, familiar with the face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

Persecution, it is true, is a crime to which our fallen nature is prone, and into which almost all parties have in different degrees fallen; but let us not on that ground, with affected philosophy, but with real indolence and indiscrimination, and in defiance of all historic verity, pretend that popery stands, in this respect, on the same footing with other religious systems. No, persecution is inherent in the very principles and constitution of the Romish church: she has been in this, as in so many other respects, "the mother of abominations"¹ to the earth. If other professedly Christian bodies long retained the persecuting spirit, it was mainly because they found it so difficult wholly to eradicate the seeds of instruction which they had received from her hand: and, while they have undoubtedly been occasionally stained with the blood of those who dissented from them, she has been even steeped in it; in the strong language of scripture prophecy, "drunk with the blood of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus."² And the testimony of her sanctioned and remunerated advocate, cardinal Pallavicini, to her unaltered and unalterable adherence to her principles, however she may, from policy suffer her unaccredited members to deviate from them, or even for a time to deny them, is equally striking and true. "The whole of our faith," he says, "rests upon one indivisible article, namely, the infallible authority of the church. *The moment, therefore, we give up any part whatever, the whole falls: for, what admits not of being divided, must evidently stand entire or fall entire.*"

We may now notice the works of Luther published during this period.

¹ Rev. xvii. 5.

² Rev. xvii. 6.

Near the end of the year 1533 appeared his treatise on Private Masses, a subject on which he had also written several years before.¹ He here mentions, in addition to the indecent haste with which the services were hurried over at Rome, having heard there of priests who, instead of the words of consecration, muttered "Panis es, et panis manebis," "Bread thou art, and bread thou shalt continue:" and of others who indignantly omitted the consecration altogether.

It is in this work that Luther gives the account of his temptation by the devil, of which such an extraordinary use has been made by his more bigoted adversaries; and on which even Bossuet is not ashamed to say, "Forced by reasons urged by the angel of darkness, he abolishes, like an impious wretch, that mass which, if we may believe him, he had said for so many years with so much devotion." And again, "Luther owns, I do not say that he was *tormented* by the devil, (which might be common to him with many saints,) but that he was *converted* by his agency: and that the spirit of falsehood had been his *tutor* in one of the principal points of his reformation." The whole substance of the passage however is, not that Luther describes a sensible "conference with the prince of darkness," but a temptation to despair pressed upon him "within his heart," and drawn from the impieties of which he had been guilty in the unchristian and idolatrous services that he had performed, during many years, as a monk. "You know that for fifteen years together you celebrated private masses: what then if such masses were a horrible idolatry?—Convicted by the law of God," Luther says, "I confess before my adversary that I have sinned and am condemned, like Judas; but I turn me to Christ, like Peter: I regard his infinite merit and mercy; and immediately he abrogates all my dreadful condemnation." He treats at considerable length,

¹ Vol. i. 163.

and in general terms, of such temptations, in a strain which shews the purport of the whole passage. "The temptations of Satan are crafty, and well calculated to deceive. He lays hold of some truth which cannot be denied, and yet so turns it about and applies it that it might deceive the most wary. So the thought which seized the heart of Judas was true, 'I betrayed the innocent blood:' Judas could not deny it; but the falsehood was in the inference. 'Therefore thou must despair of the mercy of God.' But the devil so pressed this false inference home upon Judas, that he could not stand against it, but sunk into despair."¹

This year Luther also published sermons on the Christian faith, from 1 Tim. i. 5—7; on 1 John iv. 16, "God is love;" and on the apostles' creed; all which were highly esteemed. In the first, he demonstrates the necessity of good works, "as the evidence of our justification, and for the comfort of our own consciences;" and also of faith, "by which, embracing the merits of Christ, we stand accepted before the tribunal of God." He assigns the reason why he so much insisted on the latter topic—that "the men of that age had been accustomed to hear nothing proclaimed to them but 'Keep the commandments,' while no one taught them *how* they were to do it, so as to satisfy either God or their own consciences." He urges besides, how closely self-righteousness cleaves to the heart of man. "I have myself taught this doctrine," he says, "for twenty years, both in my preaching and in my writings; and yet the old and tenacious mire clings to me, so that I find myself wanting to come to God, bringing something in my hand for which he should bestow his grace upon me. I cannot attain to casting myself on pure and simple mercy only: and yet this is highly necessary." On the apostles' creed, he speaks of it as a thing "ex-

¹ See this subject of Luther's alleged "conference with the devil" examined at length in Continuation of Milner, vol. i. p. 546—555.

tremely difficult, and to human reason next to impossible, sincerely to say, 'I believe in Jesus Christ?' "Submit the article to reason; she is utterly confounded by it, and comes to regard the whole as a fable. Hence in Italy scarcely any thing is believed about it; and our countrymen, alas! have learned to copy that kind of wisdom."

With this passage we may connect the following advice to students of theology. "You who apply yourselves to sacred learning, be admonished above all things to settle in your minds what you should believe as the truths of the Christian religion; and have the articles of your faith well considered, and confirmed by apposite texts of scripture: and then, when the devil, or heretics, his instruments, would make you doubt them, oppose to them those texts, and leave them, saying, 'I will not listen to your cavils and speculations; for thus hath the Holy Spirit directed, who commands me to hearken and incline mine ear.' The doctrine, that all our own righteousness must be renounced and our confidence placed only in Christ and his righteousness, will appear new and strange, so that many will be offended at it. So also will the doctrine that Christ himself is God, and to be worshipped as such. But in the way described I shall be assured that I do not err concerning it; and the objection from the first commandment, and other scriptures concerning the unity of God, will be answered. For, if they urge, 'You make more gods than one:' I answer, 'I do not: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are the same God: the substance and essence are one, though the persons are three. *How* the persons differ, I do not indeed understand: sufficient for me is the authority of scripture, which names the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in the last chapter of St. Matthew. If I could comprehend the subject by my reason, what need would there be of faith? But, if I will admit nothing which by my reason I cannot comprehend, I must soon give

up baptism, the Lord's supper, the word, grace, original sin, and every thing: for reason comprehends none of these things.'"

In some lectures on Isaiah, of the same date, he quotes, on c. viii. 12, the sentiment of the elector Frederic on confederacies: "That they often emboldened the parties to attempt things which they would not otherwise have ventured upon; and then, when difficulties arose they fell away, and deserted one another: which induced the elector to stand aloof from them." Again, he applies the passage c. xxix. 8, on "the hungry man dreaming that he eateth," to persecutors, flattering themselves that they had devoured and destroyed the church; mentioning first the persecutions of pagan Rome, and then those of Rome papal. "But all," he says, "is mere illusion: it is not devouring, but only dreaming that they devour. And so in ten years' time you shall see the princes and bishops, who now rage against the word of God, all come to nothing, and the gospel and its professors in safety." If not within ten years, yet within twenty, the truth of both these passages was strikingly illustrated.

On c. xxxix, he has a striking passage on the sins and miseries of human life. "The sense of the sins with which they are tempted and defiled is the greatest of all afflictions to the righteous. Every period of life has its besetting evils. In youth passion domineers; in advancing years, covetousness; and then, if a man has performed his part well in life, in old age comes self-applause. Every age also is exposed to its peculiar outward dangers. Yet even all this cannot bow the stubborn neck of man to humility and submission. It is hopeless to think of living without sin. We must cast ourselves simply on Christ, and say, O Lord Jesus, pardon me! How often and how grievously I have sinned, thou knowest: I cannot trace it myself!"

On c. xlix. 8, he laments the conceit and fasti-

diousness of the people. "The time was, when I would have preferred the right understanding of a single Psalm to all the riches of the world. But the heaven was then brass to us, and the earth iron. Now, when the windows of heaven have been opened, we are grown fastidious. He who has once perused the New Testament thinks he has nothing more to learn. The word of God will therefore be taken from us, and given to a nation whom perhaps we know not."

Here too again, after having, in treating of the fifty-third chapter, strongly asserted his doctrine concerning justification, he, on the fifty-eighth, insists on good works as the evidence of a justified state: "*Righteousness shall go before thee*—thy good works shall assure thy own conscience. . . Thus Peter says, that good works assure men of their calling. . . We are not here treating the question of justification."

He published also at this time lectures on various other parts of scripture, and prefixed prefaces to different works of other authors; and particularly, in the year 1533, to the confession of faith of the Waldenses; concerning whom, after inquiry, he had become satisfied "that they were not heretics," but sound though imperfectly-instructed Christians.—In a letter to Joachim, prince of Anhalt, who was ill and depressed in mind, he recommends cheerful conversation with his pastor, Hausman, music, and even facetious discourse: observing that God "allowed exhilaration of that kind within proper limits, and would not be displeased at our thus dispelling melancholy, and enjoying the blessings he bestowed upon us for both soul and body."

In 1535 his renewed commentary on the epistle to the Galatians appeared. It is not 'a new edition' of his former work, but the substance of a new series of lectures on that part of scripture. The account of it is to be considered however as included in the

notice already taken of this important portion of Luther's writings.¹ One or two passages may here be added.

On c. iii. 10, he thus explains what it is "to fulfil the law," in the only sense in which it can be done, or indeed the law of God be truly obeyed at all, among sinful men. "We must in the first place listen to the promise, which proposes Christ to us. Embracing him, we receive the Holy Spirit for his sake. God and our neighbour are then truly loved, good works are performed, the cross is borne. This is truly to *fulfil the law*, which otherwise remains for ever unfulfilled."²

A subsequent passage may be quoted as opposed to the notion, to which fresh currency has been recently given, that we are first brought, indeed, into a justified state by faith, but can be *continued* in it only by obedience. "Faith *perpetually*" (or to the end) "justifies and makes us alive; and yet it remains not alone; that is, it is not idle. Not that it does not stand alone in its proper province and office—for it *constantly* justifies us...but it is not idle, and without charity."

On the difficulty of treating these questions rightly, he says, on c. v. 13: "It is a nice and difficult thing to teach, that we are justified without good works; and yet to require them as necessary. Here, unless the teachers are faithful and wise ministers of Jesus Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God, able 'rightly to divide the word of truth,' faith and works, will immediately be confounded. Each topic, both faith and works, ought to be diligently urged and taught, yet so that each may be kept within its own province."

¹ Vol. i. p. 126—130.

² Of course the term, "fulfilling the law," is here used in a less strict and proper sense, not for the absolute fulfilling of it in all its "exceeding breadth," (as it must be if we would be justified by our own obedience to it,) but in the only sense in which it is ever obeyed by fallen man.

Speaking of sanctification, he alludes to his former views when a monk, and the desire he then felt to converse with a saint, or holy person; figuring to himself under that name a hermit, an ascetic, feeding on roots: but he had since learned that the saint was one, who, being justified in the righteousness of Christ, went on "to serve God in his proper calling; through the Spirit to mortify the deeds of the body, and to subdue his evil affections and desires. I joyfully therefore give thanks to God," he says, "that what I desired he has abundantly granted me, and that I see not one saint but many, yea innumerable saints; not such as empty sophisters imagine, but such as Christ and his apostles describe; and that, by the grace of God, I myself am one of the number." This, again, may be opposed to the abuse often made of his complaints of the evils existing among his own followers.

In some lectures on the first chapter of St. John, delivered in the year 1537, he thus makes the law our rule of life. "Even the moral law loses its power so far as this, that it cannot condemn those who believe in Christ, and are thus 'delivered from the curse of the law.' Yet the decalogue remains in force, and belongs to Christians that they may obey it. For the righteousness which the law requires is fulfilled¹ by believers, through the grace and assistance of the Holy Spirit which they receive. Hence all the exhortations of the prophets, and likewise of Christ and his apostles, to piety and holiness, are so many excellent expositions of the ten commandments."

His remarks on predestination are practical, rather than conformed to a system. In a commentary on Joel, on the words, "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved," he says, "In this and similar sentences, the mercy of God is offered

¹ Above, p.103.

generally to all : . . . here we ought to rest ; and believe, since God sends us his word, that we are among the predestinated ; and then, on the ground of this promise, ' to call upon' him, and be assured [in so doing] of the salvation which he thus expressly promises." In a joint paper, in the year 1536, Luther, Bugenhagen, and Melancthon observe : " We are not commanded to inquire whether we are *elect*, but to believe that he who perseveres to the end in *repentance* and *faith* is elect and saved." " This doctrine," say they, " is clear, and does not make the fallen secure, but excites them to fear the wrath of God ; for it is most certain that God is offended by all sins, whether of the elect or the non-elect."

In 1537, Luther published a small piece on the constitution of Councils, shewing what was necessary to their freedom, and why one, constituted as the pope would have it, could not be free—particularly on account of the oaths by which all persons admissible to vote were bound to support to the utmost all the rights, privileges, and powers of the papal hierarchy.

In a preface to some expositions of St. Matthew's Gospel, he expresses his fear of too great a multiplication of books ; lest, as fathers, councils, and doctors had superseded the apostles, so it should be again ; and he modestly says, he " wishes his own books to last only for the age in which they were written, and which they might serve ; but that God would give to succeeding ages their own labourers, as he had always heretofore done."

We will close these extracts with the following pious and pleasing passage, founded on Matt. xii. 35. " A corrupt heart turns good to evil, a good one turns even evil to good. For example: Does a good man see a murderer or a thief? he is moved to compassion ; pities him, prays for him, mourns over the misery of man ; admonishes him, reproves him, does all he can to reclaim him. Next, mindful of human

frailty, he humbly reflects, 'He did so yesterday, I may do it to-day!' Hence, thirdly, he prays to God to keep him, and praises him for having kept him hitherto. So much good does a rightly disposed heart derive from one evil seen in another person."

The remark of the pious and learned Seckendorf on Luther's expositions of scripture seems to be very just. "I do not deny," he says, "that there are to be found at this day commentaries on the sacred writings distinguished by erudition, eloquence, and deep research; but I confess I much doubt, whether there ever existed a man who furnished, in extemporaneous language, (for thus Luther delivered his lectures, and many of those which have been published were taken down from his mouth as thus delivered,) a more forcible and more edifying exposition of the word of God. I would not indeed undertake to defend every phrase or every opinion which he uttered, as if it were inspired: he himself earnestly disclaimed all pretensions to such perfection: but I speak of the general consistency of his expositions with the analogy of faith, and of the *heroic energy* of the language and the arguments which he employed: and I think that all, who will bestow any such pains as I have done on the study of his writings, will agree with me in this sentiment."¹

¹ So the good elector John Frederic, then in captivity, says: "My heart is deeply affected, my inmost soul penetrated by Luther's writings. I derive more edification, comfort, strength, from a page of Luther than from whole volumes of other authors."

CHAPTER XXI.

Death of George of Saxony, and succession of Henry—Reformation of his dominions—and of the electorate of Brandenburg—Joachim II.—Conferences of Haguenau, Worms, and Ratisbon—Groppe's Book—Misconduct of the Landgrave—Dangerous illness of Melancthon.

“A FEW days after the convention at Francfort, George duke of Saxony died, and his death was an event of great advantage to the reformation. That prince, the head of the Albertine, or younger branch of the Saxon family, possessed, as marquis of Misnia and Thuringia, extensive territories, comprehending Dresden, Leipzig, and other cities now the most considerable in the electorate. From the first dawn of the reformation, he had been its enemy as avowedly as the electoral princes were its protectors; and had carried on his opposition not only with all the zeal flowing from religious prejudices, but with a virulence inspired by personal antipathy to Luther, and embittered by the domestic animosity subsisting between him and the other branch of the family. By his death without issue, the succession fell to his brother Henry, whose attachment to the protestant religion surpassed, if possible, that of his predecessor to popery. Henry no sooner took possession of his new dominions, than, disregarding a clause in George's will, dictated by his bigotry, whereby he

bequeathed all his dominions to the emperor and the king of the Romans, if his brother should attempt to make any innovation in religion, he invited some protestant divines, and among them Luther himself, to Leipzig. By their advice and assistance, he overturned in a few weeks the whole system of ancient rites, establishing the full exercise of the reformed religion, with the universal applause of his subjects, who had long wished for this change, which the authority of their duke alone had hitherto prevented. This revolution delivered the protestants from the danger to which they were exposed by having an inveterate enemy situated in the middle of their territories; and the territories of the princes and cities attached to their cause, now extended, in one great and almost unbroken line, from the shore of the Baltic to the banks of the Rhine."

Such is the account given by Dr. Robertson of the next event which materially advanced the cause of the reformation.

During the life-time of his brother, Henry had possessed little or nothing beyond the small territory of Freyburg. In that district he had been careful to introduce reformation. He had however to encounter the opposition of his brother George, who expostulated with him as going contrary to the purposes, and even the promises, which he had expressed, of making no changes till a council should have defined what reformation ought to take place, and by what means it might properly be effected. He implored him not rashly to adopt a course of proceeding unworthy of his family, and contrary to his duty; not to listen to people in whose estimation "unbelief was the only sin;" or, while he pretended "to seek the gospel in barns and cellars," to risk not only the peace of his country but the salvation of his soul. "Did he plead conscience? He had only to look to himself, and not trouble his mind about others. I myself, (said George,) if power in religious

matters had been assigned me by the word of God, or committed to me by the pope and the emperor; should long ago have reformed what I considered as abuses: but, finding myself possessed of no such authority, I determine to make no innovations till a council shall direct them." If Henry would persist; he declares that he should feel it necessary to report his conduct to the emperor.

Henry however was not thus to be satisfied or impeded. He professed himself to be convinced from the holy scriptures, that the doctrines and practices hitherto received in his country were contrary to the word of God, and dangerous to the souls of men: and therefore he could not in conscience postpone a change till it should have been decreed by a council. He would however deprive no one of his rights, nor impose on any persons what might be contrary to their consciences; and he hoped in all things so to conduct himself that he could justify his proceedings to the emperor. He adds, that the people were so desirous of reformation, that they would be ready to raise tumults should he withhold it.

After the correspondence here referred to, George appears to have left Henry unmolested in his proceedings within his own small territory; but he was exceedingly anxious to prevent the introduction of similar changes into ducal¹ Saxony after his own decease. Among the expedients to which he had recourse for this purpose, we may reckon a compromise which he attempted, by proposing a partial reformation conducted according to a different model, and on this basis a reconciliation between the two parties. When this expedient failed, he had recourse to another which must be considered as reflecting much dishonour upon his memory. He

¹ By this term, though it may not be strictly correct, I would distinguish the dominions of the prince who was simply *duke*, from him who was *also elector* of Saxony.

had one surviving son, an idiot, who had been pronounced incapable of reigning, or of entering into any of the relations of life. George however now determined, according to a threat which he had some time before held out, to have him married, and to appoint him his successor. Accordingly he was married, in January 1539, to a daughter of Eric, one of the counts of Mansfeldt; but he died within a month. Being disappointed here also, George's next step was to make a will, binding Henry, as the condition of succeeding him, to maintain the ancient religion, and accede to the Roman-catholic league; and, in case of his failure to do this, directing his own dominions, as has already been stated, to pass to the emperor and king Ferdinand, till an heir professing the *true* religion should arise. This will he produced at the funeral of his son, desiring the confirmation of it by his nobles. They however, foreseeing the consequences of such a measure, declined concurring in it unless it had the approbation of Henry; which of course could not be obtained.—Henry was next desired to send over immediately some trusty persons to whom more acceptable terms might be proposed: and he in consequence himself set out for Dresden on the 17th of April, but was met on the road by messengers announcing the death of George on that same day. George was sixty-eight years of age, and had been for some weeks confined to his bed. The priest of Dresden, when George's death approached, exhorted him to call upon S. James, whom he had ever considered as in a special manner his patron saint: but some noblemen, standing by, repelled the priest, and exhorted the duke to call upon Christ, which, we are told, he did in few but emphatic words.

Henry arrived at Dresden the same evening, and was received with every demonstration of respect and joy; even those, who during George's lifetime had declared that they would leave all behind them, and

go into exile, rather than witness any change of religion, now vying with one another in their testimonies of regard for their new master. So great is the difference between a dead prince and a living one!

Maimbourg represents the change of religion which ensued as rapid indeed: "At Leipzig, Luther, in one day, and by one sermon turned the whole city from catholic to protestant!" And his remark upon it is in all respects worthy of its author. "So frail," says he, "is the foundation of the religion of these miserable nations, who are ever ready to embrace, not what may be pleasing to God, but what may gratify their princes." Nothing could be more contrary to the fact in the present instance. The truth is, as Dr. Robertson has justly stated, the people "had long wished for this change, which the authority of their duke alone had hitherto prevented."

But the proceedings in this important case, which was big with great consequences to Germany, deserve to be more particularly related.

Henry, it is to be observed, was a man of inferior talents. He was now also old and feeble; and his zeal in the protestant cause, though sincere, can hardly, I fear, be shewn (notwithstanding Dr. Robertson's statement,) to have been so warm and persevering as that of his predecessor had been in the opposite interest. He had the wisdom, however, to place himself under the direction of the elector and other able counsellors, and under their guidance he at present proceeded with vigour and success.

The first opposition offered to his designs was from king Ferdinand, who urged that the extension of the reformation was contrary to the pacification of Nuremberg and the convention of Francfort, and that its introduction into Henry's new dominions would be a violation of the rights of the bishops of Misnia and Mersburg. Henry found it not difficult to reply to these arguments.

The bishop of Misnia himself next addressed him, deprecating unlawful and unnecessary innovations. He proposed to introduce all proper reformation himself, and sent to the duke by his dean, Julius Pflug, (a name afterwards distinguished in these controversies,) a sort of 'Necessary Erudition of a Christian Man,' consisting of 195 folio pages, which he proposed to make the basis of reformation. Henry sent the book to the elector, desiring his judgment and that of his divines upon it; and the manuscript exists to this day at Weimar with the marginal annotations of Luther, Melancthon, and Pontanus, and accompanied by a letter of considerable length, in which the two former, with Justus Jonas, deliver their sentiments concerning it. It appears to be specious, and to have borrowed much from the reformers, where this could be done without impugning Romish tenets. On the whole however it was pronounced unsatisfactory and unsound.—Further correspondence followed with the bishops both of Misnia and Mersburg, but without its having the effect of staying the proposed reformation.

The elector and the landgrave lost no time in offering Henry the most effectual assistance and support; and the former of these princes immediately set out to visit him, taking with him Myconius, the pastor of Gotha. In an account of this visit written by himself the elector mentions with great pleasure hearing him and Henry Lindeman preach to immense congregations at Annaberg, on the fourth of May. He soon after proceeded to Leipzig, accompanied by Luther. On Whitsunday papal rites were abolished there; Luther preached before the duke and the elector; and the sacrament was administered with scriptural simplicity. "Thus," says the elector, "was fulfilled Luther's prediction, uttered many years before, when he heard of George's increasing severities, 'I shall live to see his whole family extinct, and to preach the word of God at Leipzig.'"

Luther preached here repeatedly. Justus Jonas also joined and assisted him; and it is recorded that, on their mentioning in their sermons the divine goodness in delivering the place from papal bondage and persecution, the audience "fell on their knees, and with many tears returned thanks to God."

Henry caused a visitation to be made of his dominions, which comprised about a thousand parishes. It was conducted hastily, and no satisfactory provision could at present be made for the instruction of the people, for want of competent teachers: some pious ministers however were invited from the neighbouring countries, and what was now done prepared the way for a more efficient reformation in the churches and the schools soon after, under the government of Henry's sons. Myconius was allowed to continue his faithful services at Leipzig for eighteen months. This excellent minister, in the course of his correspondence, gives the elector an account of a public dispute which he and Cruciger (who had visited him for the occasion,) had been enabled to maintain for eight hours together, in support of their doctrines, before the whole university and a large and splendid audience; and, as he trusts, with the best effect. The rector of the university, and some masters, assisted on the protestant side.—Much room was given to retort upon the papal clergy the charge of fickleness, which Maimbourg has groundlessly brought against the people of these parts. Though no force was used, they almost to a man acceded to the new regulations. Among the leading dignitaries, the dean alone, Julius Pflug, openly adhered to the old system. Cochläus and Vicelius, whom the late duke had supported as a sort of champions in the papal cause, withdrew from the country.

Other important changes, still tending to the advancement of the protestant religion followed. They

are thus stated by Maimbourg. "Joachim II, elector of Brandenburg, who, after the example of his father Joachim, a zealous catholic, had hitherto professed the ancient religion, now yielded to the earnest entreaties of the states of his dominions, who offered him as an inducement the liquidation of all his debts; and he made the same changes in his provinces as Henry had made in his. And even his uncle Albert archbishop of Mentz, though himself a devoted catholic, was compelled to bow before the torrent that swept across the north of Germany, and to allow to his dioceses of Magdeburg and Halberstadt the liberty of embracing the confession of Augsburg."

The history of Joachim II. will be found interesting. The reader will have in remembrance the zeal of his father for popery at the period of the diet of Augsburg. It was so great as led him to carry persecution into the bosom of his own family; and his treatment of his wife has been already briefly stated.¹ He had married Elizabeth the sister of Christiern II, the (expelled) king of Denmark, and niece of John, elector of Saxony. She was inclined to the doctrine of the reformers, and had received the sacrament in both kinds. Her own daughter, named also Elizabeth, was the person to discover this to Joachim, who was so incensed that he confined her to her own apartments, and was understood to be taking measures for her perpetual imprisonment. In consequence of this she fled from Berlin, and came to her uncle the elector of Saxony in a mere rustic car, and with only one female attendant. This was in the year 1528. The elector received her, and she continued in his dominions till the year 1546. Here she cultivated the acquaintance of Luther, and sometimes spent several months together at his house, deeply engaged in the study of the word of God.

¹ Vol. i. p. 404.

It is remarkable that the daughter who thus "betrayed her own mother," not indeed "to death," but to bonds or to exile, herself within ten years embraced the faith she had, not in this instance only but in others, laboured "to destroy;" became zealous in its support; and after the death of her husband, Eric duke of Brunswick, effected the full reformation of that dutchy.

Such being the temper and the principles of the elder Joachim, there could be no doubt of the care which would be taken, in the education of his son and heir, to fix him in the tenets of the Romish church. This was made an object of special attention, both to Joachim himself and to his brother the archbishop of Mentz; and, as if to render the barrier thus placed around the young man insurmountable, he was married to the daughter of the inveterate George of Saxony. An apparently accidental circumstance however defeated all these precautions. In the year 1519, the younger Joachim, while yet only a boy of fourteen, accompanied his father to Francfort, to the diet which raised Charles V. to the imperial throne. On the way, at Wittemberg, he happened to hear Luther discourse on the articles of the Christian faith, and particularly on that of justification; and was much captivated with him. Thus appears to have been sown in the mind of the youth that seed, which, fostered by his mother's pious care, afterwards expanded itself; and to this occurrence, probably, it may be traced that Prussia is at the present day a protestant kingdom!

Several years indeed passed, as might have been expected, ere the impression which had been made produced its effects, and ere Joachim was brought openly to avow himself on the side of the reformation. During the lifetime of his father, however, in the year 1532, while he was himself leading the troops of Saxony to the Turkish war, we find him in correspondence with Luther, and affording to the

reformer much satisfaction by the spirit which he manifested. In 1535, his father died, and he succeeded him: and the next year the landgrave addressed to him a very excellent letter, which we should have had greater pleasure in quoting, had the character of the writer been more consistent with the principles he professed. It was designed to confirm Joachim in his attachment to scriptural doctrine, and to excite him to a bold avowal of it. "You know," says the landgrave, "that we must all die, and that the time of our death is altogether uncertain: you know also the words of Christ, 'What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' Many," he observes, "and one in particular,¹ would aim to draw him away from the truth of the gospel; but he trusts he would stand firm, alike against threats and caresses, and prefer the glory of God to all that the world could offer."—Still however Joachim had not the courage to act up to this advice, or various considerations restrained and, I fear we must say, ensnared him. From his accession, indeed, he willingly connived at the introduction of evangelical teachers among his subjects; but it was slowly and gradually that he was induced to go further. His brother John, marquis of Brandenburg-Anspach, outstripped him in his religious course, by publicly establishing the reformation throughout his territories, in the year 1538. At length however, perhaps excited by his brother's example, Joachim adopted more decisive measures, and, in the year 1539, published such an ecclesiastical regulation, both for doctrine and discipline, as could scarcely have been surpassed, especially under the head of doctrine, had Luther himself drawn it up.

From this document, a few passages, bearing especially upon the great doctrine of justification, may deserve to be transcribed. They will serve to shew, how uniformly that doctrine, upon this funda-

¹ George, the landgrave's father-in-law, as well as Joachim's,

mental point, which numbers to the present day so much revile, and numbers more, by every refinement, or rather perversion, strive to evade, was maintained by the reformers of different countries. "This," says the regulation, "is the chief topic of all, and herein lies the whole sum of the gospel, namely, in its being taught clearly and purely, and held fast even unto death, in spite of all contradiction that can be offered to it, that we obtain the remission of sins, justification, and final and eternal salvation, by the mere grace of God, and only through faith in the redemption of Christ, and by no worthiness, work, or desert of our own." The necessity of retaining the exclusive term *only*—"that we are justified by faith *only*, without our own works"—is then insisted on; and the term is affirmed to be fully borne out by the tenor of scripture, and to be indispensable to the purity of the doctrine, and to the peace and safety of distressed consciences; and "many," it is declared, "who now preach concerning faith, but avoid this assertion of its exclusive efficacy, are to be regarded as suspicious and dangerous teachers." The document then proceeds to answer those who reproach, and those also who abuse the doctrine, as if it superseded the necessity of good works. "The true statement is by no means to be abandoned or obscured on account of such persons. The doctrine of the divine law is in the first instance to be inculcated. The suitable fruits of repentance and faith are to be required. The power and nature of faith are to be explained, which are such that it cannot exist in a heart that is hard, proud, ungodly, and insensible of sin and of the divine wrath against it: for faith is no cold and idle opinion: on the contrary it is earnest, efficacious, and active; so that the soul which seriously *believes*, and apprehends first the anger of God on account of its sin, and then his grace independently of any merits of its own, cannot but be filled with unspeakable joy and hope and

consolation, derived from the grace of God, and with ardent love towards him; and, as he commands, towards its neighbour also. Hence proceed all good works"—which the paper then describes in detail. After having done this, it remarks: "The term *only*, annexed to faith, by no means excludes these, as if they were not to be done: for it is one thing to do good works, and another to be saved by them. They are to be done, but they avail not to salvation: therefore the Son of God must die; and to this point [that is, to our becoming interested in his salvation] faith alone relates. We ought to do good works from obedience to God, for the glory of his name, for the benefit of our neighbour, and to prove the sincerity of our faith. For, as faith soars upwards, bringing us into the favour of God, so works descend downwards, proving us to be in his favour. Yet faith does not procure our salvation by its intrinsic merit, but by embracing the divine promise. Thus we have righteousness before God, and salvation by faith only; but from this faith, through divine grace, good works do spring."

Of the importance of the reformation of Brandenburg, Seckendorf remarks, no one can doubt, who considers the ample extent of the provinces concerned: and to us its importance must appear still more striking, when we consider that the electorate of Brandenburg has since grown into the kingdom of Prussia. The elector of Brandenburg, indeed, influenced by the hope that he should thus be enabled, with less prejudice, to promote more extensively the reformation of Germany at large, never acceded to the protestant league; and during the Smalkaldic war, and in the events which followed it, he acted not a part which we can approve; but at this period he accomplished more than Luther conceived would have been found practicable.

Among the epistles of Melancthon is preserved one of considerable length, drawn up by him for the

elector Joachim, and addressed to Sigismund king of Poland, whose daughter Joachim had married for his second wife, and on whom he was dependent for some part of his dominions. It is dated in October 1539, and is intended to explain and justify the steps which the elector had taken. It is written in a respectful and affectionate style, yet with becoming firmness; and the following passage exhibits a pleasing picture of the piety of the elector's retired life. Speaking of his wife, (Sigismund's daughter,) and of the happiness he enjoyed, and should ever be careful to preserve, in his marriage with her, he says: "She knows that religion is a matter of earnest concern with me, and that my mind abhors all unrighteous counsels. And, as it is our mutual desire that God should be glorified in our connexion, we often unite in prayer, and often discourse together on the divine commandments, on the hope of eternal life, and on the blessings derived from Christ."

The history of these more interesting events has withdrawn our attention from the conference which was to be held, in pursuance of the convention of Francfort, between select persons of the contending parties; who were to endeavour to draw up articles of accommodation between them, to be submitted to the next diet. The futility of all such attempts must be obvious to any one who considers the nature of their differences, and that they stood irreconcilably opposed to each other upon such fundamental points, as the very rule by which controversies were to be decided, and the authority of the pope to decide them in a summary and absolute manner. Where no beneficial result therefore could ensue, the detail of proceedings would only be wearisome, and often vexatious. The emperor however seems to have entertained the hope, that accommodation might be effected, and hence to have sincerely desired the conference. To the protestants all such proceedings

were useful, both because they gained them time, which was highly for their advantage, and also because they accustomed men to see religious questions brought under discussion, instead of being submitted to the absolute dictation of an individual. On this very account they were objects of high offence to the court of Rome, which regarded the proposal of them as little short of an act of treason and rebellion against the church. The opposition of the pope and his devoted adherents had the effect of long delaying and greatly interrupting the execution of the proposed measure. A meeting was to have been held at Nuremberg in August 1539, preparatory to such conference. It did not however take place; nor does any thing appear to have been done till June, 1540. Then, in the words of Dr. Robertson, "in a diet held at Haguenau, matters were ripened for the conference. In another diet assembled at Worms," in December following, "the conference was begun, Melancthon on the one side, and Eckius on the other, sustaining the principal part in the dispute; but, after they had made some progress, though without concluding anything, it was suspended by the emperor's command, that it might be renewed with greater solemnity in his own presence, in a diet summoned to meet at Ratisbon. This assembly was opened with great pomp," April 5th, 1541, "and with a general expectation that its proceedings would be vigorous and decisive. By the consent of both parties, the emperor was entrusted with the power of nominating the persons who should manage the conference, which it was agreed should be conducted not in the form of a public disputation, but as a friendly scrutiny or examination into the articles which had given rise to the present controversies. He appointed Eckius, Gropper, and Pflug, on the part of the catholics; Melancthon, Bucer, and Pistorius, on that of the protestants; all men of distinguished reputation among their own adherents,

and, except Eckius, all eminent for moderation, as well as desirous of peace."

So far we may adopt the statement of this accomplished historian; in what follows, where opinion is blended with fact, we must regard his representations with caution, or even with distrust. "As they were about to begin their consultations," he states, "the emperor put into their hands a book, composed, as he said, by a learned divine in the Low Countries, with such extraordinary perspicuity and temper, as, in his opinion, might go far to unite and comprehend the two contending parties. Gropper, a canon of Cologne, whom he had named among the managers of the conference, a man of address as well as of erudition, was afterwards suspected to be the author of this short treatise. It contained positions with regard to twenty-two of the chief articles in theology, which included most of the questions then agitated in the controversy between the Lutherans and the church of Rome. By ranging his sentiments in a natural order, and expressing them with great simplicity; by employing often the very words of scripture, or of the primitive fathers; by softening the rigour of some opinions, and explaining away what was absurd in others; by concessions, sometimes on one side, and sometimes on the other; and especially by banishing as much as possible scholastic phrases, those words and terms of art in controversy, which serve as badges of distinction to different sects, and for which theologians often contend more fiercely than for opinions themselves; he at last framed his work in such a manner, as promised fairer than any thing that had hitherto been attempted, to compose and to terminate religious dissensions."

Dr. Robertson here appears to write in the character of a philosopher and a statesman in preference, if not to the disparagement of that of the Christian divine. This is entirely to the taste of modern times,

and will be sure to secure him the praise of large and liberal views, among those who regard a high sense of the importance of revealed truth, and all “contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints,” as the infallible mark of narrow-mindedness and bigotry. Yet it would not be easy, perhaps, to give a better description, couched in the language of a friend to such measures, than that which Dr. R. has here supplied, of the plausible arts by which attempts have in all ages been made to fritter away the great truths of the gospel, sometimes one sometimes another, ‘till none were left.’ Listen even to the Unitarian: what does he aim at, but ‘a natural order’—‘great simplicity’—‘the very words of scripture,’ exclusively of all others, and indeed of many of *them*—‘to soften the rigour of some opinions’—to ‘explain away absurdities’—to ‘banish scholastic phrases,’ and ‘terms of art,’ the ‘badges of distinction to different sects, for which theologians often contend more fiercely than for opinions themselves’—and thus ‘to compose and terminate religious ‘dissensions?’ I am far from insinuating that Dr. R. would designedly furnish a screen, under which Socinian errors should be covertly introduced: I am far also from denying that there are truth and propriety in some of the suggestions which he would here convey: all error has some truth at the bottom of it: but the whole passage is dangerous—from many writers I should call it *insidious*—and the more dangerous as proceeding from so high an authority, and being precisely adapted to the prejudices of the age in which we live. The interests of divine truth have little to fear from open opposition, compared with what is to be apprehended from indifference, and frequently from plausible but enfeebled statements, which preserve perhaps the form or the semblance of sound doctrine, or what *may* be construed to imply it, but from which all the force and spirit of truth have been evaporated.

Gropper's book, we shall find reason to conclude was of this kind : and it met with the fate which must ever attend all such attempts to unite what is irreconcilable—it pleased neither party—rather it much offended both. It was in vain therefore that the emperor laboured to bring about an accommodation between them : and the whole affair issued in a temporizing recess, offensive to the pope from the proposal which it contained of referring the questions at issue to a national synod, or even to a diet of the empire, in case a general council could not be held ; and to the protestants for the restrictions which it imposed upon the liberty they had previously enjoyed. As the latter murmured loudly against it, Charles, unwilling to leave any seeds of discontent in the empire, at a time when he had danger to apprehend both from the Turk and from the king of France, granted them a private declaration, in the most ample terms, exempting them from whatever they thought oppressive or injurious in the recess, and ascertaining to them the full possession of all the privileges which they had ever enjoyed.

Before we take leave of the subjects discussed in this conference, we may observe, that a stricter discipline appears to have prevailed among the protestants, than either from their own complaints, or from the representations of their enemies, we should perhaps have expected. They wish their opponents could witness the state of things in their churches. “ No one was admitted to the holy communion, till he had been examined and absolved by the pastor or deacon ; and in that way numbers received instruction, and many sought advice in particular cases ; and every Sunday there was a large attendance for these purposes. If any were immoral, they were excluded from the communion ; and, where the case required, the pastor admonished the magistrate of his duty respecting them. If any, after admonition, profanely refused to come to the sacrament, they

were publicly censured, and considered as excommunicate." Seckendorf remarks, "These things deserve to be noted, in opposition to the difficulties which many, not only people but ministers, urge against examinations of this kind, though their necessity was thus publicly acknowledged in this diet by the divines deputed by so many princes and states." In fact, that is here described of which our church laments,¹ and all wise and faithful pastors lament, the loss to a considerable degree among ourselves.—And, alas! how much has the practice of consulting their ministers fallen into disuse even among the more religious part of their flocks. The intercourse between ministers and their people has become, too frequently, of that trite, general, and unprofitable kind, which is almost all that passes between the people themselves. They have little to learn, little to ask of us; and they want confidence and earnestness of mind to ask even that little: and we ourselves, alas! unduly taken up with literature, or with news, or with business, have too little to bring forth, "from the fulness of the heart," for the edification of those with whom we converse. And this is apt more especially to be the case where religion has become familiar, and the "fervour of spirit," with which it was at first both delivered and received, has gradually worn off. May God, in his mercy, forbid that this growing "lukewarmness" should after all become the bane of religion in our highly favoured country, and particularly in those places which have enjoyed the most abundant religious advantages! May we remember, in a truly impressive and efficacious manner, that "many who are first shall be last!" May we "repent and do our first works," that our "candlestick" may never be "removed out of its place!"

In the course of these conferences, when all hopes

¹ Commination Service.

of accommodation were well nigh extinguished, the elector of Brandenburg and his brother the marquis George proposed, and it was not doubted with the privity of the emperor, that a deputation should be sent to Luther, to solicit him, if possible, to point out some way in which they might come to terms of agreement. Prince John of Anhalt, who was joined also by his brother George, with one of the elector of Brandenburg's counsellors, undertook this embassy. Such a reference, it must be acknowledged, was no small honour to the Saxon professor; nor could it be construed otherwise than as placing, after all that he had said and done, and all that had been said and done concerning him, much confidence in his wisdom and upright intentions, as well as acknowledging the great influence which he possessed. The united prudence, temper, and constancy of Luther on this occasion are highly applauded: but his advice led to no practical result; as indeed it was scarcely possible that it should do.

Conferences like those which were now carrying on, where such important interests were at stake, such nice distinctions to be made, and such opposite parties (if possible,) to be reconciled; where also every art would be employed to draw the protestants into unguarded concession, and then to take advantage of it; must obviously have been very distressing to those engaged in them, especially if they were men of refined minds, tender consciences, and truly pacific dispositions;—all which qualities eminently distinguished Melancthon. He was scarcely the man that could be expected to stand sufficiently firm in the trying circumstances in which he was now placed. Nor was he adequately supported either by his associates, or by *all* the leading patrons of his cause. Both the landgrave and the elector of Brandenburg appear to have been disposed to carry concession too far. Bucer was still more in danger than Melancthon of being betrayed into what might be denomi-

nated *trimming*, for the sake of peace; and accordingly his conduct gave great dissatisfaction to his friends. Pistorius indeed, Melancthon's other colleague, is spoken of as a "pious, candid, and firm character:" but I find little concerning the part which he took in these discussions, except that he "concurred with Melancthon." The latter amiable person, however, though at first censured by the elector for not adhering more closely to the Confession, seems seldom to have conducted himself with greater constancy and spirit than at this time. The elector's representatives at Ratisbon commended him highly; Luther himself vindicated, or at least apologised for him to the elector; and the elector was afterwards induced to express satisfaction at what he heard of his conduct. He himself declared that he would rather die, than compromise the truth and wound his own conscience; and that, in fact, he should actually die of grief if he were to do so: and accordingly we find the emperor offended at what he called Melancthon's *stiffness*, which he ascribed to the suggestions of Luther. This induced Melancthon to write to the emperor a pretty long letter, explaining the principles on which he felt bound to act, and begging, as the greatest favour he could receive, that he might be released from the task which had been imposed on him, and which he felt to be one of oppressive weight.—As is apt however to be the case with good men, ever alive to the sense of their own failings and imperfections, Melancthon could not satisfy himself: he confesses his weakness, and even supposes himself chastized for it by an accident which befel him, from the overturning of the carriage in which he travelled to Ratisbon. His wrist appears to have been dislocated, and other injury sustained, so that he never perfectly recovered the use of his right-hand. On this the good man says, "I am chastened of God, and justly suffer, as for my other faults, so particularly for my undue facility, in suffering myself

to be employed in vain and foolish schemes, contrary to the advice of so many wise men." He could not however but be conscious of the difference between the spirit which actuated himself and such persons as he approved, and that which characterized his opponent Eckius. He speaks with grief of him and others as evidently not seeking the truth, nor desiring to serve the church, but only to gain the praise of being subtle disputants upon the most solemn subjects. "I have heard him," he says, "vain-gloriously boasting that he could maintain either side of the question. . . . I do not think any good man can be so mild and gentle, as to listen unmoved to his sophisms and juggling tricks. He sports with terms of the most serious import, continually conceals his real meaning, and only aims to embarrass an adversary. There is great danger in encountering sycophants of this kind."

The firmness and zeal of the elector of Saxony, throughout the whole of these proceedings, were most conspicuous. "No one," said he, "would more gladly see peace established in Germany than I should do, but I would not for the sake of it yield any thing contrary to the will of God and the dictates of my own conscience; and he, I trust, will keep me free from all such sin. Peace established on those terms would be a judgment from God, and would prove the occasion of irreconcilable discord." He reprobated the counsels of those who "put religion and outward peace on the same footing, whereas, when the two came in competition, the latter ought always to give way to the former." He looked with great jealousy upon a sort of middle party which he thought was rising up among the protestants, and in which he reckoned the elector of Brandenburg: and he feared much more, he said, the caresses of Ratisbon than the severity of Augsburg. He would have his representatives, therefore, adhere "to the very terms, as well as to the sense of the Confession, and

reject all ambiguous language which might be twisted to oppositè meanings."

The truth of history requires us here to record a different and very painful account of another leading patron of reformation. It has been already intimated that, notwithstanding the zealous support given to the sacred cause, even from an early period, by Philip landgrave of Hesse, the conduct of that prince in private life was not consistent with his religious professions. By his own confession it appears, that he had long indulged in licentious habits, though against the most alarming remonstrances of his own conscience; and a short time before the commencement of the conferences which we have now reviewed he had persuaded himself, that the only remedy to be found for his incontinence was in marrying another wife, in addition to the daughter of the late duke George, to whom he had been for many years united, and who had brought him a pretty numerous family of children! Having contrived most sophistically to satisfy himself that the scriptures allowed him this indulgence, he resolved upon it, and sought to obtain the sanction of Luther, Melancthon, and Bucer, confidentially communicating to the two former, through the medium of the latter, the most secret grounds of his proceeding. This was a step exceedingly to be deprecated, as it tended to involve the most venerable reformers, and even the reformation itself, in all the scandal of the landgrave's conduct; and accordingly it has been made the occasion of virulent invective against both protestants and protestanism at large. It is by no means necessary to the defence of the reformation, that we should either apologize for the landgrave, or assert the unerring wisdom of Luther himself; than whom no man ever more sincerely disavowed all pretensions to infallibility: yet, after a careful examination of the documents brought forward, I venture to affirm, that they by no means

warrant the charges and insinuations which have been founded upon them, and are in many respects highly honourable to the protestant divines, even though we should allow that they would have done better in entering their solemn protest against the whole proceeding, and giving to the landgrave no further advice whatever, which could be at all construed into even an equivocal sanction of it.

The landgrave actually carried his purpose into effect, on the third of March 1540, and that with the consent of the landgravine, his lawful wife, in her own hand-writing and attested by her name and seal! With regard to him, we must leave the whole of his case to his Judge. With respect to others, so far was it from being true, that “all the most renowned persons connected with the reformation in Germany concurred in this iniquity;”¹ that, when it came to be known, it produced the deepest and most painful sensation, and strong protestations on the part of the elector and the duke of Saxony, the elector of Brandenburg, and various others, both laymen and ecclesiastics. The tender and conscientious Melancthon, in particular, was so deeply affected with the whole affair, that his distress of mind brought on an illness which threatened to prove fatal to him.—With this illness some interesting and important occurrences are connected. Melancthon was seized with it at Weimar, on his way to the appointed conference at Haguenau. When Luther, at the elector’s express desire, visited his suffering friend, he found him apparently at the point of death: “his sight was obscured, his understanding nearly gone, he had lost his hearing and his speech, he recognized no one, and took no sustenance.” Luther, filled with consternation and grief exclaimed, “Gracious God! how hath Satan prevailed to derange and disfigure this noble instrument of thine!” Then, turning to

¹ Bossuet.

the window, (as his custom was,) he stood and prayed for him in an extraordinary tone of confidence and earnestness, pleading that God must indeed hear them to preserve their confidence in him for the time to come. After which, taking him by the hand, he thus affectionately addressed him: "My dear Philip, be of good cheer, you shall not die? Though God can never want sufficient occasion against us, yet he willeth not the death of a sinner: he hath pleasure in his life, not in his death. He hath pardoned the greatest of sinners: never assuredly will he cast you from his presence, or suffer you to die overwhelmed with sin and grief. Give not way to your sadness, nor become your own destroyer; but trust in God, who is able to kill and to make alive!"—While Luther thus addressed him, Melancthon began a little to revive. Henceforward he gradually improved in health, and was eventually restored. "I should have died," he himself afterwards said, "but for Luther's visit to me."

In a will which he a short time before composed under symptoms of this attack of illness coming on, and with the presentiment of death on his mind, he thus speaks of Luther. "I return my thanks to the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther, first because from him I received the knowledge of the gospel, and next because of his singular kindness shewn to me on a thousand occasions; and I desire my family to regard him as a father. Having found him to be endowed with a distinguished and heroic genius, with many great virtues, and with eminent piety and learning, I have always honoured and loved him, and thought his friendship worthy of the most assiduous cultivation." "Such friendships as I here record," he beautifully adds, "I am persuaded are not to be extinguished by death, but will soon be renewed in heaven, where they will be enjoyed to much greater advantage, and yield unspeakably higher delight."

CHAPTER XXII.

Progress of the Reformation—Germany—Denmark and Sweden—France—Austria—Italy—Luther's Writings—Agricola and Antinomianism.

IMPORTANT instances have recently occurred of the progress of the reformation; others present themselves to our notice. Eckius and Cochläus, in their correspondence with cardinal Contarini, bear striking testimony to the extensive and firm establishment which the new system had obtained in Germany. The former dolefully complains, "That all homage was withdrawn from the saints; that the miserable souls in purgatory had no longer any prayers offered for them; that the sacred rites of the mass were discontinued; that images were insulted and broken; that the treasures of the church were alienated, the pope and the priesthood held in contempt, and Rome taken for the Babylonish harlot; that celibacy was at an end, and monastic vows were violated." He reproaches the blindness and inertness of those who had not extinguished the conflagration while it was a mere spark—which was the case when he disputed with Carolstadt and Luther at Leipzig. Even the German prelates, he says, now laughed at the widespread mischief, and secretly hoped to be delivered by its means from the exactions and impositions which they had suffered from the court of Rome.—Cochläus, writing from Breslaw about the same time,

says: " Our prelates in Germany, whether through cowardice or despair, sit still, and suffer every where the curtailment of their revenues. The Lutherans, on the contrary, spare neither care, nor labour, nor expence, but devise every means of establishing their sect. They ordain superintendents, a new species of bishops, to whom they give the power of ordaining priests and deacons in their respective districts. They diligently train their youth in the schools in devotion to their own doctrine, and in abhorrence of the papists; and, that they may acquire confidence in preaching to the people, they exercise them in declamations taken from the postils¹ of Luther. They assign handsome incomes, drawn from the abolition of the private masses, to their ministers, and to school-masters; so that it will be extremely difficult to eradicate from the minds of men the pestilent evil which has been implanted at school, and cherished in public assemblies, and by the reading of books at home. To God however all things are possible!"

The discerning reader will receive these accounts with great satisfaction, perceiving nothing in them but what bears honourable testimony to the diligence, the piety, and the discretion of the protestants.

The reformation of Magdeburg and Halberstadt with the connivance of the archbishop of Mentz and Magdeburg, has been before noticed.² The proceedings at Halle in the dutchy of Magdeburg are more particularly recorded. Superstition had been there carried even beyond the ordinary limits, and the accumulation of pretended relics was immense. The writer of an account of Halle states, that there were collected in the churches forty-two entire bodies of saints; and portions of others to the amount of eight thousand one hundred and thirty-three. The following are a few specimens of the relics. A

¹ Expositions of the gospels and epistles.

² Above, p. 114.

portion of the earth out of which Adam was created; fragments of Noah's ark, of the bodies of the patriarchs and prophets, and of the Virgin Mary's clothing at the time of the miraculous conception; the body of one of the infants slain by Herod, and those of seventeen out of the eleven thousand virgins, whom the ignorance of the times, (mistaking the name *Undecimilla* for *undecim millia*,) had constituted the companions of S. Ursula. Once in the year a public exhibition was made of all these relics, and to those who then "devoutly contemplated them, offering at the same time prayers to God, and giving money to the collegiate church," indulgences were granted extending to many thousands and millions "of years and days." The very indefinite and nullifying clause however was added, that those persons should have the benefit of these indulgences "who were found worthy to enjoy it!"—As early as the year 1523, the head of a monastery, named Nicholas Demuth, encouraged the introduction of evangelical truth at Halle: and in 1527 George Winckler boldly preached it, though he paid the forfeit of his life for so doing. The inhabitants subsequently importuned the archbishop, "on their knees," to allow them the liberty of hearing the word of God; but without success. At length, in 1541, they took the liberty of themselves inviting Justus Jonas from Wittemberg; who became their superintendent. His labours were successful, and the protestant faith obtained a permanent settlement at Halle.

About the same time the reformation was publicly established in the cities of Ratisbon and Hildesheim. In each place opposition was made by the bishop and clergy, but they were unable to withstand the tide of public opinion.

But the palatinate of Bavaria was a still more important accession to the protestant cause. It was at this time under the government of Otho Henry, a younger member of the Bavarian family; who

afterwards succeeded to the electorate, which is connected with the palatinate of the Rhine. This prince had for some years favoured the protestant principles, but he seems to have waited for that more general reformation of the church, which he and many others had hoped might be effected by a council. Seeing however less and less prospect of so desirable an event, he now avowed himself, and, with the advice of his chaplain Michael Diller, formerly an Augustinian monk, and of Osiander from Nuremberg, introduced the reformation throughout his territories.

Events at this time occurred also in the bishopric of Naumburg, in Thuringia, which tended to confirm and perfect the reformation in that diocese: and, after some disputes, Amsdorf, a friend of Luther's, was advanced to the bishopric, on the nomination of the elector of Saxony, to the exclusion of Julius Pflug, who had been hastily and irregularly elected by the chapter. Amsdorf was a man of family, and had now been for eighteen years superintendent of Magdeburg.

The elector in this instance was disposed to outstrip the zeal of his divines. He proposed to appoint a bishop deprived of all the civil authority which his predecessors had exercised, and to suppress the canons and cathedral clergy altogether. Luther and others however dissuaded him from such measures, pointing out several things of an external nature which were best administered where such officers existed; and also the inconveniences which had arisen from destroying the connexion of superior families with the church, and thus removing the stimulus afforded to the cultivation of learning among persons of rank.

The protestants at this period had much confidence in the king of Denmark; but some distrust, it appears, had grown up among them of the king of Sweden. The same illustrious prince, Gustavus

Vasa, who had in so vigorous and decisive a manner introduced the reformation into Sweden nearly twenty years before,¹ still reigned over that country; and Luther on this occasion undertook to write to him, exhorting him to constancy in the true doctrine, and to good understanding with the elector of Saxony and the other protestant confederates. Gustavus replied to Luther in terms of respect and affection. The fact, he said, had been, that his advances had met with apparent neglect, and he thought it not therefore becoming his dignity to repeat them. It would be very acceptable to him, however, if through Luther's means any arrangement could be made between him and the confederate princes, conducive to the honour of God, the maintenance of divine truth in his dominions, and the best interests of his family and successors.—In consequence a correspondence was opened, in the course of which Gustavus wrote to the elector and the landgrave in the pious strain of which the following extract furnishes a specimen. "Nothing," he says, "could be more to his heart's desire, than that, through the divine illumination, and the influence of the Holy Spirit, the preaching of the pure and saving word of God should become universal, and be crowned with the greatest success: that he himself, as a Christian prince, and a member of the catholic church of Christ, had taken earnest care to promote this object in his kingdom; and he doubted not but God would protect his work against all adversaries: as however both force and fraud were to be apprehended, he conceived it to be just, pious, and Christian to enter into alliance for the defence of their religion; and therefore, at the instance of his brother and neighbour Christiern king of Denmark, he professed himself ready to treat with the German princes upon that subject."—It is gratifying to trace such marks of ingenuous piety and zeal

¹ Vol. i. 234—239.

for religion, in a man on other grounds eminently distinguished as a patriot and a hero. The result was his association in the protestant league.

In other places reformation was desired and attempted, but without success, or even with a calamitous issue. The latter was particularly the case at Metz, at that time a free imperial city, though since united to France. Numbers of the citizens, and not a few of the senate, were attached to evangelical doctrine, as now preached to them by William Farel, a Frenchman, who had been eminently useful in the reformation of Switzerland; and considerable hopes were entertained that protestantism might here obtain an establishment, and thence spread into Lorraine and the neighbouring parts of France. The reformed party applied to the protestant league to be taken under their protection: but the elector doubted how far it would consist with their engagements to the emperor, to accede to this request; and Luther and Melancthon gave it as their opinion, that it was in itself unwarrantable to undertake the support of a minority, who could be considered but as private individuals, against the governing powers of their own state. They had great apprehensions also that it might, in this case, prove as inexpedient, as it would be improper.—Here again we have an instance of the strictly correct limits within which the protestants confined their justification of resistance in the defence of their religion.—They interposed however their good offices in behalf of their brethren at Metz, by an embassy to the senate, through which they particularly urged that one parish church in the city should be granted for the use of the friends of reformation: and this the senate promised. But the whole business was shortly after terminated by a transaction of the most disgraceful nature. The bishop of Metz, cardinal of Lorraine, violently opposed all reformation, and restrained all public preaching in the city. In consequence, the citizens in great

numbers went out to hear preachers in country places, who were supported by the more opulent friends of the reformation. On Easter Sunday 1543, about two hundred persons, men and women, had thus resorted to Gorsa, a castle belonging to count Furstenberg, to hear Farel and receive the sacrament from his hands. While they were afterwards at dinner, a son of the duke of Guise, who was related to the bishop of Metz, and commanded a troop of horse in the neighbourhood, fell upon them with his soldiers, massacred many of them, drove others into the Moselle, and treated the women with the most brutal barbarity. The protestant princes remonstrated with the king of France upon this atrocious proceeding; but obtained nothing in reply beyond courteous words, and a disavowal of the step taken by Guise, with an attempt to give another colour to the transaction. The emperor also connived at it; and no redress was obtained.—Soon after the senate of Metz, with Charles's concurrence, utterly prohibited the reformed doctrine, drove many into exile who professed it, and required all books which taught it to be delivered up under pain of heavy penalties. Such were the worthy measures whereby the kingdom of darkness and sin was supported, by a party which spares no invective, no misrepresentation against the peaceable protestants, when any thing occurs on their side which can be distorted into an appearance of hardship or persecution.

We have before seen that a strong feeling in favour of reformation existed in Austria.¹ It manifested itself at the present time in a very remarkable public document. "The nobles of Austria" took occasion from the late calamities suffered from the Turks, to present to king Ferdinand, in a convention of the states held at Prague, a petition, in which they deplored the state of the public, and their own sad condition, who had a victorious and cruel enemy for

¹ Above, p. 55, 72.

so near a neighbour: it was high time therefore, they urged, to look out for remedies; and "especially that the wrath of God might be appeased, which, being provoked by the sins of men, brought such judgments upon them." They set forth the evils that prevailed; that all discipline, public and private, was at an end; but that "the contempt of the word of God was the chief cause of all." From both sacred and profane history they shewed, that God "had many times severely punished the most flourishing kingdoms for false worship and the contempt of his word." They pointed out the formidable indications which appeared of like evils coming upon themselves; and proceeded: "Truly we know no other remedy, most dread sovereign, than that the word of God be purely taught, and the people stirred up to amendment of life; for in the true worshipping of God all our safety consists." Adverting to the points which had been agreed upon, and to the injunctions given at Ratisbon to the bishops to reform the abuses in their churches, they add: "Wherefore we humbly beseech your majesty to give command that the gospel be purely taught, especially that point of doctrine which relates to justification—that our sins are pardoned through Christ alone; in the next place, that men be exhorted to the practice of charity and good works, which are the fruits and evidences of faith; that they be made afraid of sin; . . . that those who desire it be permitted to have the Lord's supper administered to them according to the custom of the primitive church; that the bishops be required to reform abuses, and to appoint able ministers to instruct the people, and not to turn out sound preachers, as they have hitherto done." Many churches, they stated, "were now altogether destitute;"¹ whence it came to pass, that the common sort of people were with difficulty kept from wholly degenerating into paganism." "We therefore," they conclude, "hum-

¹ Above, p. 72.

bly pray your majesty, not to be wanting to us in so pious and necessary a cause. And let not your majesty think that we so importunately beg this, that we may thereby have greater liberty, or because we are given to change: for we acknowledge that our salvation rests only upon Christ; that the knowledge of the gospel is to be adorned with holiness of living; and that we are bound to obey and serve your majesty with our lives and fortunes.”—This petition was presented, in the name of the nobility and states of Austria, by twenty-four noblemen, and the deputies of ten cities, (among which was Vienna,) besides their neighbours of Stiria and Carniolia, who united with them.

Ferdinand, in the style with which statesmen are familiar, condoled with them under the evils which they lamented, and which caused him extreme grief; protested the deep interest which he took, and had manifested in the cause of religion; and declared that no due admonition, on his part, should be wanting to churchmen. He still hoped, he told them, for a satisfactory adjustment of existing differences: in the mean time, they must “submissively wait, and, without attempting any change or innovation, follow the footsteps of their forefathers, walking in the old way of their religion, as well as of civil duty and obedience. As to the decree of Ratisbon, they must not imagine that it in any way concerned them; the intent of it being only that the catholics should continue in the old religion, and the protestants in that which they followed at the time of the accommodation, till a final arrangement should be made: and, this being the case, he could not allow his people to act in any other way.”

This answer being received, the petition was in substance renewed, though in few words; with the observation, that, unless the object aimed at were granted, victory and good success against the Turks could not be hoped for.—England could not at this

period have furnished a proceeding comparable to the petition of "the nobles of Austria:" yet what is the religious state of blinded and bigoted Austria to this day, and what, as contrasted with it, has been that of Great Britain almost from that era to the present time!

Venice is spoken of as a place which waited the result of the proceedings at Ratisbon, and was ready to receive the reformation, if the conferences and negotiations there had a favourable issue. Near the close of the year 1542 an interesting correspondence was opened between that city and Luther. A long and eloquent letter is preserved, addressed to him in the name of "the brethren of the church of Venice, Vicenza, and Treviso," by Baldassare Altieri, an Italian, acting as secretary to the English envoy. It breathes much pious affection, earnest desire after pure religion, constancy amid persecutions, and high veneration for Luther, whom the persons concerned regard as "their spiritual father." It apologizes for their having so long neglected to acknowledge to Luther the great obligations which they owed to him—a sort of communication which would have proved consolatory to both parties on account of their common faith; complains of the exile, imprisonment, and various species of persecution to which they were exposed, as residing so near the seat of Antichrist; and entreats the interposition of the protestant princes of Germany with the senate of Venice on their behalf: adverts to the discord concerning the sacrament, which had been productive of very painful consequences even among *them*; as also to the injury they suffered from heady and high-minded, but incompetent teachers; and implores advice and assistance on these and other points.¹

Luther's answer is remarkable and very interest-

¹ The devoted character of Altieri, and the high literary attainments of the Italian friends of the reformation, have been strikingly illustrated by Dr. M'Crie. Ref. in Italy, 1827.

ing.¹ “I find in you,” he says, “such and so great gifts of God’s prevenient grace, that I feel ashamed of myself, who, after being so many years conversant in the word of God, am conscious that I fall far short of the spirit which actuates you. I am sensible that, what you in your candour and affection attribute to me, I do not deserve. I really am much below the opinion you form of me. I am a sinful man; though one whom God has called out of the deepest darkness into his marvellous light, and, unfit and unworthy as I am of it, has committed to me so great and weighty a ministry. I rejoice exceedingly, and heartily congratulate you, and bless God the father of all grace and heavenly benediction, that, whether by means of my writings or those of others, he has made known to you the saving and unspeakable mystery of his Son Jesus Christ. From me indeed, directly at least, you can have derived but little, since I have but seldom written in Latin, and have small pretensions in that way. But through what channel you have derived the blessing is of little consequence: God is the source of all, both to you and to us: to Him be praise and glory: Amen!”—He proceeds: “I have been ready to abstain from answering your letter, seeing nothing that I had to say, worth writing to persons whom God had prevented with so rich gifts of his Spirit. For what spiritual good can be wanting to those, who know and confess Christ the Son of God; who so ardently hunger and thirst after righteousness; who are so happy as to suffer for Christ, in the manner you do; and who hold Antichrist and all the enemies of our Divine Master in such utter abhorrence? Who could have hoped for such things from people living in Italy itself, the very domain of Antichrist—who would not willingly tolerate you even if you were placed beyond the boundaries of the world itself. But, by such exam-

¹ It was supposed by Seckendorf to be lost, but it has since come to light.

ples, He, who is 'able to do above all we ask or think,' bids us ask and confidently expect of him, that he will accomplish the work which he has begun in you.—That I may not however disappoint or grieve you, I will cast myself on your candour and kindness, and write you such an answer as I am able."—Concerning the sciolists and prophets that "ran without being sent," of whom they complained, he says he could easily believe what they stated; for such persons had given him more trouble than Antichrist himself had done.—"Our churches," he says, "are at peace: through the grace of God, sound doctrine, the right use of the sacraments, and learned and faithful pastors are every where found among them. But the proper fruit of the word is not equally apparent. The hearts of the people are cold; and many abuse spiritual liberty to the encouragement of lukewarmness and carnal security.¹ May the Lord Christ increase in *you* the gifts of his Spirit! May he correct and perfect all things amongst us, and hasten the day of our redemption! The world, the Turk, and the pope rage in blasphemies against the Lord, lay waste his kingdom, and mock at his will. Yet they riot in abundance, and starve the famished members of Christ. But greater and mightier is 'He that is in us, than he that is in the world.' He triumphs and will triumph in you even unto the end. May he comfort you by his Spirit, by which he hath called you into the union of his mystical body! We cease not to give thanks for you, and have no doubt that you do the same for us."—With respect to books, (a subject which they had mentioned to him,) he says: "I hope you have Melancthon's Common Places, and what he has written on Romans, Daniel, and some other books of scripture. Of mine, scarcely any are in Latin, except my exposition of Galatians, which was taken down by the hands of others. Those in German are of no use to you.—Farewell in the

¹ How descriptive of our own state!

Lord!" He concludes: "Respectfully and affectionately salute all the brethren in the Lord, and commend me to their prayers, that the Lord may in a happy hour take me to himself! I am weary of living: I have lived long enough; and have seen greater things effected all around, than any one could have hoped for when I first assailed indulgences, with much more caution and respect than they deserved. Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who 'only doeth wondrous things!' Amen."

From this letter of Luther's to the Venetians we may again pass to a brief notice of the principal works published by him about this period.

One was on the nature, powers, and uses of general councils. On the legitimate powers of a council he lays down, what will appear very obvious to us, though it would not be so to the people of that age, that it "could not make any article of faith, or enjoin any new duty, or render novel ceremonies binding on men's consciences: neither had it a right to intermeddle with civil government, or to make canons for the aggrandizement of its own members: on the contrary, it ought to see that all innovations in doctrine, repugnant to the holy scriptures, with all superstitious or unprofitable ceremonies, were condemned and removed; and always to make scripture the rule for the determination of controversies." This work was highly offensive to the Romanists.

In an exposition of the cxth Psalm he pronounces a strong sentence upon the schemes of those, who thought that the differences between the Roman catholics and the protestants might be made up by compromise and mutual concession. "Let them go on: we shall not envy the success of their labours: they will be the first who could ever convert the devil, and reconcile him to Christ. In things which are in our power, in ceremonies and externals, we may lawfully seek agreement in this way; but not

in things pertaining to the faith and kingdom of Christ. The sceptre of the Lord, the rule of faith and of practice, admits of no bending and joining, but must remain straight and unchanged."

On the subject of defence, or resistance, which was much discussed in a meeting of the allies at Francfort, his mind seems now to have been fully made up, and upon very solid grounds. "It is the duty," he says, "of every prince to promote the exercise of true religion in his dominions, and to protect it against external violence. This defence is authorized both by the divine law and by that of nature, against all persons of only equal authority; and, even if the name of the emperor, and the recesses of the diet be alleged, these are invalid from the defect of consent, and the protests and appeals lodged against them. The emperor is not an absolute monarch: power over religion can never belong to him, seeing he cannot exercise even political power, except with certain forms, and the consent of the princes." He still however limits resistance strictly to defence when attacked: he would have no anticipation of aggression.

A letter is preserved among his German works, which he addressed, in conjunction with Bugenhagen, Jonas, Melancthon, and Cruciger, to the senate of Nuremberg, concerning a general form of absolution used, after the sermon, in the protestant churches. Osiander objected to it, on the ground that there were many in the congregation not prepared for absolution. Luther and his friends thought the form unobjectionable; but advised that, if Osiander felt scruples, he should be allowed to omit it, without either censuring those who used it, or being censured by them.—Had this truly wise and charitable way of healing differences, in things not essential, been generally adopted, how much would the peace, and even the uniformity, of the church have been promoted! many are the subjects of discord which

would have thus dropped silently into oblivion, while injunction or prohibition has now given them perpetuity.

In some very pious and edifying lectures on the 'Psalms of Degrees,' (cxx—cxxxiv,) he commends earnestly the study and exposition of the word of God, which he considers as the special service and offering that God now required of his ministers. He warns the people against fastidiousness, conceit, and a want of relish for the divine word—"a disease," he says, "which too naturally grows up in us, and is more dangerous in proportion as it is apt to be unobserved. But Satan has assuredly gained a victory when we begin to slumber, to be secure, and to feel satiated."

The following passage is beautifully expressive of that simplicity of taste for divine truth, which is a strong mark of advancement in wisdom and in grace. "I am a professed divine, who, amidst various dangers, have attained some moderate experience and skill in the sacred scriptures: but this does not prevent my having daily recourse to the catechism, to the creed, the decalogue, and the Lord's prayer. I rehearse them to myself with a close consideration of every word—what truth it really conveys. And, when a multiplicity of business or any other cause prevents my doing this, I sensibly feel the want of it. The word of God is given us thus to exercise and quicken our minds, which without such a practice contract rust, as it were, and lose their tone. We see into what snares men continually fall: and what else is the reason of it, but that they feel secure? they do not pray, they do not hear and meditate on the divine word; they are content with having it in the book, where they may read it when they please. Hence Satan imperceptibly instils into their hearts a contempt for the word; and this leaves them exposed to despair or other great dangers. For with what shall a man defend himself against the enemies of his soul, when he has lost 'the sword of the Spirit?'"

The following passage presents Luther's own answer to those who exaggerated the mischiefs consequent upon the reformation, and represented them as so great that it would have been better had no change been attempted. "It is not easy to get over those scandals, when Satan, or when subtle and able men set them forth in glaring colours, and charge us as the authors of them. We see the licentious liberty that prevails, and the dissolution of discipline, greater than existed under the papacy. But are we answerable for this? In preaching the word, in contending by means of the word, we do but as we are commanded; nor may we on any consideration withhold obedience to the divine command. The kingdom of Christ is of more worth, not only than peace—especially such a peace as existed under the papacy—but than heaven and earth themselves. And then consider the other side: open your eyes and see the monstrous impieties which before prevailed! No where was one pure sentence heard concerning sin—grace—the merit of Christ—really good works—the magistracy and other offices and relations of life. All was deformed and lost beneath corrupt and pernicious glosses. Then, what were the profanations of masses, what the impostures of indulgences, purgatory, and other abominations devised only as sources of gain! Mankind appear to me to have been purposely and studiously exposed, by impious teachers, to Satan and eternal death. Look at the two sides of the question: there are evils and disorders on both, but which of the two is to be preferred? I had almost said I would rather live in hell with the word of God, than in paradise without it."

A treatise of Luther's against antinomianism connects with the history a person whose name has already appeared in this work, and from whom better things might have been hoped. This was John Agricola Islebius, or Agricola of Eisleben—the same place of which Luther was a native. This man was

of humble origin, but, having obtained some previous education, he had studied at Wittemberg under Luther and Melancthon, whose tenets he professed to embrace. He afterwards became master of the school in his native town, and was admitted a preacher; in the discharge of which office he appears to have possessed a degree of popular talent. Hence he was taken by Albert count Mansfeldt, in the train of the elector of Saxony, to the diet of Spires in 1526; and to that of Augsburg in 1530; and it is in the latter connexion that we have heard of him as one of the protestant preachers.¹ He appears to have been a vain and inconstant man, prone to innovation, but without firmness to adhere to his own dogmas; and we accordingly read of his repeatedly recanting them. Elated with his honours, he ventured to animadvert on Melancthon for the form of ecclesiastical visitation which he had drawn up in 1527. He afterwards removed to Wittemberg, and was allowed to preach there, and read lectures in the university. He broached opinions, however, which Luther felt himself called upon to refute, and which their author then abandoned. About the year 1538 he circulated, anonymously, some theses maintaining that the law is not to be preached for the purpose of bringing sinners to repentance, and condemning what Luther had advanced in his commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, concerning the use of the law in awakening the consciences of men. With these theses others were connected, in which S. Peter was charged with not understanding Christian liberty; and his exhortation to Christians, to give "diligence to make their calling and election sure," was openly reprehended.

Against these pernicious dogmas, Luther without naming their author, maintained and published six academical disputations; in which he affirmed it to be the proper office of the law, as given to sinners, to

¹ Above, p. 11.

discover to them the wrath of God against their offences, and thus to lead them to conviction and repentance of sin: so that repentance, properly so called, may be said to take its beginning from the law: and he shews this to be the plan and doctrine of scripture, even according to the very texts which had been adduced on the other side. He particularly insists on S. Paul's method in the Epistle to the Romans, which begins with the "revelation of wrath:" and it is "silly trifling," he says, "to talk of preaching that revelation of wrath, and yet not preaching the law—which, in fact, is the self-same thing." Moreover the law (he asserts,) was to be set forth, not only to the ungodly, for the purposes just mentioned, but also to pious persons, to admonish them of the duty of crucifying the flesh and their various evil propensities and passions. To propose therefore to take away the preaching and use of the law out of the church would be a blasphemous impiety.—He then points out the consequences to which antinomian principles lead; one of which is the subversion of the doctrine of grace itself: 'for,' he says, 'where there is no law there is no transgression?' and, where there is no knowledge of sin, there can be none of its forgiveness, or of grace; and the result will be, that men will live careless and unconcerned except about the present world." "These men," he remarks, "pretend to preach finely about grace and the remission of sins, but they avoid the doctrine of sanctification and newness of life in Christ: forsooth that men may not be rendered uneasy, but may enjoy uninterrupted consolation. For, whereas they ought to say, If you be an adulterer, a fornicator, drunken, proud, covetous, an usurer, you can be no Christian; [instead of this they say,] Though you be such, only believe in Christ, and you will have no need to fear the law; Christ hath fulfilled it all! They see not how sanctification follows upon justification; so that a Christian must necessarily be a partaker of the

Holy Spirit, and lead a new life: and, if he does not do that, let him know that he has no part in Christ."

Concerning himself, Luther made an observation which has by no means met with the regard to which it was entitled: "That, if at any time he had taught that the law was not to be preached in the church, it was unjust to impute to him a sentiment long ago discarded, when he had since clearly and frequently laid down the contrary. He had taught many other things under the papacy with great sincerity; and indeed there was scarcely now to be found so miserable and burdened a papist as, from conscience and the fear of God, he had once been: no wonder then if he had need *to grow* in the knowledge of Christ."

After this publication of Luther's, Agricola again professed to renounce his errors: but his conduct was unsteady and inconsistent. He afterwards withdrew into the dominions of the elector of Brandenburg, and insinuated himself into his favour. Luther congratulated himself on his removal from Wittemberg, and complained bitterly of the trouble he suffered from such airy and conceited spirits, calling themselves his disciples.—The account of this man may suggest useful admonition; and he gave occasion to discussions, the result of which, even as here briefly exhibited, may not be unimportant.

In the next year Luther published expositions of the ninetyeth Psalm, (the "prayer of Moses the man of God,") and of some of the minor prophets. In the preface he observes that there were at that time men, and more would afterwards arise, who despised theological studies, and indeed *all* studies: there ought therefore to be some to proclaim the praises of God, and to disseminate the knowledge of his word. In such pursuits he desired to spend his days; and, in particular, he would employ the remainder of them in explaining the writings of Moses, the fountain from which both prophets and apostles, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, had drawn.

On blasphemous thoughts and temptations he remarks, that they are no proof or occasion of divine displeasure, when we hate and reject them: they are even made a special means of calling forth those "groanings which cannot be uttered," that are peculiarly pleasing to God.

On the benefit to be derived from Christian communion he thus feelingly speaks. "I am myself a professor of theology, and many have acknowledged that they had derived no inconsiderable assistance from me: yet I have often felt myself most sensibly raised and helped by a single word from a brother, who thought himself very much my inferior. The word of a brother, pronounced from holy scripture in a time of need, carries an inconceivable weight with it. The Holy Spirit accompanies it, and by it moves and animates the hearts of his people as their circumstances require. The greatest saints have their times of weakness, when others are stronger than they."

In the same year he published an earnest Exhortation to prayer against the Turks. In this work he solemnly admonishes both parties in Germany of their sins; the papists of their errors and cruelties, the protestants of their corruption of manners, which dishonoured the sound doctrine they professed. Particularly he reprehends the repugnance of both nobles and people to endure pastoral reproof, and their unwillingness decently to provide for their ministers, at a period when the articles of life had risen to three times their former price; a circumstance which he ascribes in great measure to the prevailing spirit of avarice and rapacity. He anticipates that God would ere long punish Germany, either by civil war or by means of the Turks. He earnestly exhorts all orders of men to reformation; and then, after making that their first care, to exertion against the enemy. And here he rejects every idea of despondency, or of sitting still and doing nothing, referring all, like

the Mahometans themselves, to predestination or fate. "It is true," he says, "that what God has ordained must come to pass; but I am not commanded, rather I am forbidden, to pry into his unrevealed purposes. As I know them not, it is tempting God to neglect what I evidently ought to do, and thus to plunge myself in ruin. Precepts are given, that I may know and do my duty: the word of God teaches me that, and bids me commit what is unknown to God." "Let us," he says, "discharge our duty, and not trouble ourselves about predestination, concerning [the specific appointments of] which we have no revelation, no light, no knowledge at all. Let us dismiss the subject from our thoughts, and leave it in the obscurity which belongs to it; only taking care to do what is commanded us and what we know ought to be done."

Among his letters of this period an interesting one is preserved, addressed to Myconius, pastor of Gotha, who was very ill, and appeared drawing near his end. This good man had written Luther word that he was "sick, not unto death, but unto life;" meaning that he expected his sickness to remove him to life everlasting; a sentence which exceedingly pleased the reformer. In his answer he said, "I beg and implore of the Lord Jesus, who is our life, our health, and our salvation, that he would not permit such an addition to be made to what I suffer, as that I should see you or any of my comrades break through the veil and enter into rest, leaving me here behind in the midst of demons. I pray the Lord to make me sick instead of you, and to suffer me to lay down the tabernacle of an exhausted and useless body, which has done its work." And again, at the close of his letter: "Farewell, my dear Frederic; may the Lord never permit me to hear of your taking your passage, while I remain behind; but may you be the survivor. So I ask, and such is my will, and let my will be done. Amen!—I say this because my will is directed to the glory of God, and not to my own pleasure.—

Again farewell ! we pray for you from our inmost souls, and are greatly afflicted at your illness."—Myconius recovered, and survived Luther ; which he attributed to Luther's prayers. He said the effect of Luther's letter was such, that in reading it he seemed to hear the voice of Christ saying, " Lazarus, come forth ! "

A few additional particulars may be noted from his letters. Concerning Melancthon, who, having this year received an addition of a hundred florins to his stipend, proposed to continue the Greek lecture at Wittenberg without remuneration, Luther wrote to the elector, wishing him to appoint some younger person to perform that service. " Melancthon," he said, " had been like a servant of all-work to the university for twenty years past, and he well deserved the additional emolument which the elector had awarded him. The whole Christian world, moreover, was indebted to him ; and the adherents of Rome, he was happy to say, feared none among the learned so much as Melancthon and those who had been trained by him."

All his letters from this period to the end of his life breathe earnest desires after release, and dismissal to his eternal rest. He lived five years longer, but it was amidst increasing infirmities and sufferings : and he was very unequal to those severe labours in which he had engaged, and in which, as Seckendorf observes, he still never spared himself. Yet we see in him throughout the heart of a Christian hero. Writing to Lauterback, pastor of Pirna, he expresses his joy at the reformation begun in Cologne—of which we shall have to speak in the next chapter. He says, " If the people of Bethsaida and Chorazin here in our own country will not receive the prophet, there will be found the Samaritans and the woman of Canaan to do it. Let us therefore only persevere in preaching, praying, suffering : a reward awaits our work ; we labour not in vain."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Maurice succeeds Henry of Saxony—His line of policy—Henry of Brunswick expelled—Reformation of his territories—Situation of the Protestants—Herman archbishop of Cologne—The bishop of Munster—The princes of Henneberg.

WE now proceed with the course of events which followed the diet of Ratisbon.

Affairs in Hungary had taken an unfortunate turn for the house of Austria; and it was to provide against the consequences of what had occurred or was anticipated in that quarter, that Charles had made such liberal concessions to the protestants in his declaration appended to the recess of the diet. By this means he obtained a vote of such ample supplies of both men and money for carrying on the war against the Turks, as left him under little anxiety about the security of Germany during the next campaign.

Immediately upon the conclusion of the diet, he set out for Italy. As he passed through Lucca, he had a short but fruitless interview with the pope. They could neither agree between themselves on any proper method of composing the religious disputes in Germany, nor could the pope remove the causes of discord between Charles and the king of France, which soon gave occasion to a fierce war, commencing in 1542, but terminated again by the peace of Crespy, in September, 1544.

About the time that the diet of Ratisbon broke up, Maurice succeeded his father Henry in the government of that part of Saxony which belonged to the Albertine branch of the Saxon family. "This young prince, then only in his twentieth year, had, even at that early period, begun to discover the great talents which qualified him for acting such a distinguished part in the affairs of Germany. As soon as he entered upon the administration, he struck out into such a new and singular path as shewed that he aimed, from the beginning, at something great and uncommon. Though zealously attached to the protestant opinions, both from education and principle, he refused to accede to the league of Smalkald, being determined, as he said, to maintain the purity of religion, which was the original object of that confederacy, but not to entangle himself in the political interests or combinations to which it had given rise. At the same time, foreseeing a rupture between Charles and the confederates of Smalkald, and perceiving which of them was most likely to prevail in the contest, instead of that jealousy and distrust which the other protestants expressed of all the emperor's designs, he affected to place in him an unbounded confidence; and courted his favour with the utmost assiduity."¹ On the other hand, he discovered a jealousy of his cousin the elector of Saxony, which in the end proved very fatal to the latter, and had well nigh occasioned an open rupture between them, soon after Maurice's accession, on the subject of a paltry town on the Moldau. "They were prevented however from proceeding to action by the mediation of the landgrave of Hesse, whose daughter Maurice had married, as well as by the powerful and authoritative admonitions of Luther."¹

The admonitions of Luther to the contending princes on this occasion may well be styled "powerful and

¹ Robertson.

authoritative:" they were even surprisingly free and vehement. He apologizes, as an ecclesiastic, for interfering in a political question: but "the credit and the interests of religion," he says, "were at stake, when so fierce a quarrel arose on so trivial an occasion, between princes nearly related, and both of them professed supporters of the protestant faith. Peacemakers," he observes, "are pronounced blessed, and the children of God: whence it might be inferred that peace-breakers were the children of the devil. And this sentence of our Lord extended to men of all ranks and conditions alike. Should this feud actually break out into a war," he even tells them, "wise men would regard them, instead of great princes, as resembling drunken rustics fighting in a tavern about a broken wine-cup, or idiots contending for a morsel of bread. In the mean time, this little spark might kindle into a conflagration, over which the enemies of the gospel, and even the Turks themselves might rejoice; while the devil and his agents would tauntingly observe, 'So these are the leaders who undertake to point out to others the way to heaven!'" He even threatens them with "eternal damnation" if they refused a pacific arrangement of their differences. He refers them to the example of the elector Frederic the Wise, who having a dispute with the people of Erfurt, and being told by some lovers of war, 'that it would not cost him more than five men to take the city,' replied, that 'the loss of one would be too much.' "Retire," he says, "each of you into his chamber, and pray seriously to God: sure I am that his Spirit will give you another mind." He adds, that "he for his part would take the side of him who was willing to submit his cause to an equitable and peaceable arbitration; and, whichever of them it might be, he would animate him to do valiantly in the name of the Lord, in case the other refused his acquiescence." If it should be thought, that in this composition Luther

assumes too much, and uses stronger expressions than became him, it may be observed, that his address was never completed, the quarrel being appeased.

Much apprehension might not unreasonably have been entertained for the cause of religion in ducal Saxony, from the habits to which the people had so long been accustomed under the government of George; from the influence which his counsellors still retained; from the youth and aspiring character of Maurice; and from the misunderstandings into which he fell with the elector. Happily however little obstruction occurred, and many of Maurice's plans contributed to extend and render permanent the reformation which had been established in his dominions. In the year 1543 he published a copious instrument for the regulation of ecclesiastical affairs, in which the instructions given to the clergy were excellent. He founded three noble schools, in which he provided for the free education and support of two hundred and thirty scholars; appointed exhibitions for a hundred students in the university of Leipzig; and, with the concurrence of the states of the province, appropriated for ever the revenues of the vacated monasteries and colleges for these purposes, for the maintenance of the clergy, and for other pious and charitable uses. In order also to do away the apprehension of any capricious changes, he soon after, by a public instrument, constituted the doctors, licentiates, and professors of the university of Leipzig, (among whom the names of Aless, Pfeffinger, and Joachim Camerarius occur,) a consistory, to which all matters relating to religion should be referred. Such a measure he thought became him, and was called for by his circumstances, "he being but a youthful prince, and one for whom the civil affairs of his country would find sufficient employment." His provisions for the advancement of religion and learning were afterwards still further extended and

improved, both by himself and by his brother and successor, Augustus.

Concerning Maurice, we may further remark, that his marriage with the daughter of the landgrave was a sudden measure, and not thought to be very agreeable to his parents: but it proved, in the admirable ordinations of providence, an essential link in that remarkable series of events, in which Maurice, having first been a principal instrument of the emperor in subverting, as it appeared, the protestant cause in Germany, afterwards became the means of giving it permanent and independent establishment, and of frustrating all the emperor's ambitious designs. Seckendorf piously remarks the superintending hand of providence in overruling the novel course into which this young prince struck out, which appears to have been dictated by deep and artful ambition, and which occasioned so much anxiety and distress to his protestant friends. Could he have been brought zealously to coöperate with them, they would have been ready to think themselves secure against the attempts of their enemies: yet very probably he would have been overwhelmed along with them; and then, humanly speaking, no power would have remained to restore either the liberties of Germany, or the protestant religion within the empire.

In the mean time the pope was so urgently pressed on the subject of a general council that he proceeded actually to convoke one to be held at Trent, (a city in the Tyrol subject to the king of the Romans,) on the first of November, 1542; and named three cardinals to preside in it as his legates. The time however was altogether unseasonable, when a fierce war was just kindled between the emperor and the king of France, and the place was such as could give no satisfaction to the protestants. The legates repaired to Trent, and remained there several months; but no person met them, except a few prelates from the ecclesiastical state; and the pope, in order to

avoid the ridicule and contempt which he incurred from the enemies of the church, recalled them and prorogued the council.

The circumstances of the emperor and the king of the Romans obliged them at this time even to court the favour of the protestants by repeated acts of indulgence. All the emperor's concessions to them at Ratisbon were now renewed, with the addition of whatever they demanded for their further security. A decree of the imperial chamber against one of the cities which had entered into the league of Smalkald was suspended. Henry of Brunswick however, a furious bigot, and no less obstinate than rash in all his undertakings, continuing to molest the place, the elector of Saxony and the landgrave of Hesse assembled their forces, declared war in form against him, and in space of a few weeks stripped him entirely of his dominions. This summary and decisive chastisement inflicted upon him by the protestant princes filled all Germany with a dread of their power. It excited however considerable jealousy, even among some of their own friends. Henry appealed to the emperor, who declared that he could not disapprove what had been done, as the offender had refused submission alike to the emperor's injunctions and the admonitions of the diet: he only wished the conquerors to use their victory with moderation. It was at length agreed that Henry's dominions should be held in sequestration by persons appointed by the emperor: and he himself soon after renewing his attempts was made prisoner by the landgrave and Maurice, and retained in close confinement till a new change of affairs procured him his liberty.

What we however are principally concerned to notice is, the reformation of his country of Brunswick Wolfenbuttle, while it was in the hands of the elector of Saxony and the landgrave of Hesse. A regulation of its ecclesiastical affairs, drawn up by Bugenhagen, Corvinus, and Martin Gorlitz, and fully introducing

protestant doctrines and protestant usages, was published by authority in 1543: and, though this was abrogated on Henry's restoration, five years afterwards, yet it was productive of happy effects while it lasted; and the good providence of God so ordered, that the protestant religion was re-established in this country by wise and equitable laws, under the government of Julius, the son and successor of Henry. Nay, Henry himself, before his death, became reconciled to the elector and the landgrave, and is spoken of as a convert to the protestant faith.

The contest between Henry of Brunswick and the elector of Saxony had been carried on, not only with the sword but with the pen also, each writing against the other with great acrimony: and, some charges having been thrown out by the former against Luther, he too was induced to join in the controversy, with more than his usual violence and severity. It will not be needful to give any extracts from this work: but we may observe, that, by furnishing some additional information respecting that issue of indulgences which occasioned the reformation, he draws from Sleidan an explanation which may be a little amusing to the reader. This historian tells us, that three archbishops of Mentz having died within a short time the expence of procuring their palls from Rome fell too heavily upon the chapter; as each pall cost about thirty thousand florins: and that Albert had therefore been elected to the archbishopric on the express condition that he should pay the charges of his own pall. To reimburse himself, Albert applied for a bull for indulgences, which the pope granted, with the provision that half the money raised should be applied to the rebuilding of St. Peter's church at Rome. This introduces the following statement. "On St. Agnes' day, when in the mass said in St. Agnes' church at Rome they come to the words, 'Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world,'

two white lambs are laid upon the altar, which are afterwards given to two subdeacons of St. Peter's church, who rear, and in due time shear them. Their wool, mixed with other wool, is spun, and woven into these palls, which are three fingers broad, and hang down from the shoulders to the middle of the breast before, and to the reins behind; being kept stretched by thin plates of lead, of the same breadth. When they are thus woven, they are carried to the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul, and, after some prayers said, are left there all night. Next day the subdeacons receive them again, and decently lay them up, till some archbishop that needs it (for they are seldom granted to any inferior prelates,) applies for one. This is neither a curious nor a costly commodity, and yet the archbishops pay dear for it to the pope. Nor is any one allowed to use the pall of his predecessor, or, if translated to a new see, to retain his old one."—"So well," exclaims Luther, "knows the pope how to sell his cloth!"

Emboldened by their successes, and by so many concessions in their favour, "the princes of the league of Smalkald took a solemn protest against the imperial chamber, and declined its jurisdiction for the future, because that court had not been visited or reformed according to the decree of Ratisbon, and continued to discover a most indecent partiality in all its proceedings. Not long after this, they ventured a step further; and protesting against the recess of a diet held at Nuremberg, which provided for the defence of Hungary, refused to furnish their contingent for that purpose, unless the imperial chamber were reformed, and full security were granted them in every point with regard to religion."¹ Such was the state of things when the emperor returned from the Low Countries to hold the diet at Spire in the year 1544. The great object

¹ Robertson.

which he proposed to himself in this diet was, to prevail on the Germanic body to afford him its hearty and united support in his war with the king of France; and he succeeded in giving to the assembly such an impression of the conduct of that monarch, who had entered into alliance with Solyman, and of the obstruction which he occasioned to both the great designs, of procuring a general council, and of providing means for effectually checking the formidable progress of the Turkish arms, that all parties seemed well inclined to comply with his wishes. "Charles perceived that nothing could now obstruct his gaining all that he aimed at, but the fears and jealousies of the protestants; which he determined to quiet by granting every thing that the utmost solicitude of these passions could desire for the security of their religion. With this view, he consented to a recess whereby all the rigorous edicts hitherto issued against the protestants were suspended; a council, either general or national, to be assembled in Germany, was declared necessary in order to reëstablish peace in the church; until one of these should be held (which the emperor undertook to bring about as soon as possible,) the free and public exercise of the protestant religion was authorized; the imperial chamber was enjoined to give no molestation to the protestants; and, when the term for which the present judges in that court were elected should expire, persons duly qualified were then to be admitted as members, without any distinction on account of religion. In return for these extraordinary acts of indulgence, the protestants concurred with the other members of the diet in declaring war against Francis in the name of the empire," and in voting the requisite subsidies for carrying on both it and the war against the Turks.¹

Such are the statements given by Dr. Robertson,

¹ Robertson.

which are no doubt substantially correct: yet the impression on the whole made concerning the security, the power, and even the triumphant progress of the protestants seems much stronger than is warranted by a more minute inspection of original documents. The truth is, they had all this time great difficulties to encounter, and great anxieties to endure: and this was especially the case at the periods of the successive diets. Maimbourg charges them with fierceness and insolence; but Seckendorf asserts that their real feelings were of a very different kind. At the time of the diet of Nuremberg in 1543, in particular, he says, "So great was the accumulation of business, so many the machinations formed against the protestants, such their distrust and want of harmony among themselves, such their alarms and their mistakes, that it is wonderful that their two leaders, the elector and the landgrave, could support the labours and cares which devolved upon them." They were exposed to every species of chicane in their intercourse with the emperor's ministers; at the same time that unbounded professions of confidence and friendship were employed to lull their suspicions to sleep, or to gain their concurrence in measures necessary to the emperor's present projects. Even in his concessions, Charles thought proper to adhere to the practice of which he had first given the example at Ratisbon, by not introducing them into the recesses of the diets, but appending them as declarations made by himself. In this form they had no legal authority; and they were never acknowledged by the Roman catholics, as obligatory.—In like manner, though the emperor would for the time restrain the proceedings of the imperial chamber, and suspend its decrees; and though he even appointed a commission to investigate its conduct, and examine into the complaints of the protestants against it; he would rescind nothing that it had done, nor make any change in its constitution, by admitting others than catholics to act as

judges. All its decrees, though their execution was suspended, remained in force, to be acted upon when circumstances might permit. Add to this the persecutions carried on under the emperor's sanction, wherever his power was not controlled; together with the very obvious reflections, that circumstances imperiously required him for the present to act the part he did in Germany, and that to be so compelled and restrained must have been intolerably galling to a prince of Charles's despotic and ambitious temper: we shall then not wonder at the anxieties of the protestant party, or at hearing the elector thus piously, though gloomily, vent his feelings. "If," says he, "according to the prophecy of Daniel, the empire is doomed to dissolution, and the time of that event is at hand; what is appointed must be borne: but may Almighty God, the Father of all mercy, shew himself the Lord, and the Parent, and the Master in this cause, and direct all things better than human foresight could conceive! May he withstand the pope, the Turk, the emperor, and the French, and preserve his word in safety to the end of time, whatever may become of all beside!"—We shall admire also the spirit manifested by Luther, and his friends under these circumstances. The citizens of Augsburg had extensive commercial dealings with Italy; and they had through that channel received intimations how confidently a speedy suppression of Lutheranism, by the united efforts of the pope and the emperor, was now anticipated. They communicated their apprehensions to the elector, who laid the case before Luther and his colleagues. Their reply was: "We see that we can by no mere human prudence secure this great object—the preservation of pure and orthodox religion. Let us do therefore whatever we can towards it, that may be agreeable to the will of God; but let us never think that it is in our power to provide against all future dangers; and let us be careful to avoid all unlawful

means of attempting it." In the final clause they especially refer to a disposition intimated on the part of the Augsburgers, to refuse to have the next diet held in their city, if the emperor should direct it to meet there.

One transaction of the emperor's, at the very time when he was courting the protestants, was personally painful to the elector of Saxony, and at the same time too clearly spoke the real sentiments of its author. William, duke of Cleves, the elector's brother-in-law, had a dispute with the emperor respecting the dutchy of Gueldres, of which the former held possession. He was well affected towards the reformation, and would gladly have availed himself of the assistance of the protestant confederates in support of his claim; but, as they declined to interfere in a dispute merely of a political nature, he sought protection in an alliance with the king of France. The emperor however marched into his country, and compelled him to submit in the most abject manner; and the first article of the treaty which he made with him was, "That he should not depart from the religion of the catholic church; and, if he had made any alterations, should restore things again as they were before."

The proceedings of the late diets were in a high degree offensive to the court of Rome. The pope considered both Charles's concessions to the protestants, and his consenting to call a council, and to admit of public disputations in Germany, with a view to determining the doctrines in controversy, as sacrilegious encroachments upon the prerogatives of the holy see; and in consequence he addressed to Charles a remonstrance, written in a style of the highest authority. He tells him, that "in the discharge of his own duty, and in the love he bore to him, he could not dissemble his thoughts concerning his proceedings, which tended to the danger of his own soul, and the great disturbance of the church." "He

had ever before his own eyes," he says, "the example of Eli, the high priest, whom God severely punished for his too great indulgence to his sons;" the like to which might befall himself, if he suffered the emperor, "the first-born son of the church," thus to go astray without admonition. It behoved the emperor to follow "the uniform practice of the church, and the custom of his forefathers," which was to refer the whole decision of all matters relating to religion to the see of Rome: but, so far from doing this, he had taken upon him to appoint general and national councils, without any regard to *him*, who "alone had the power of calling councils, and determining the affairs of religion:" nay, not only so, he had "allowed private men, and even the assertors of damned heresies, to judge in such questions;" had presumed "to give judgment concerning ecclesiastical possessions, and had restored to honours and dignity men who were out of the communion of the church, and long ago condemned by his own edicts." Then, alluding to the emperor's alliance with the king of England, an excommunicated heretic, (which appeared to the pope little less portentous than that of the French king with the Turkish sultan,) he declared "his fears to be still further increased when he considered who the persons were with whom he had contracted friendship." He refers him to the examples of scripture, Corah, Dathan, Abiram, Uzzah, and king Uzziah, from which he might learn "the wrath and vengeance of God against those who usurped to themselves the offices of the high priest." Many other instances in history also shewed "that God had signally crowned with honour and blessings those princes who assisted the head of the church, and the see of Rome, and rendered that love and duty which are due to the priesthood; whereas such as did otherwise were afflicted with most grievous punishments." "The care of the churches was indeed an office most acceptable to

God, but it did not belong to the emperor, a civil governor, but to the priests, and specially to himself, to whom God had given the power of binding and loosing." He called upon him therefore to rescind and annul what, with too much lenity, he had granted to those rebels and enemies against the see of Rome, for that otherwise he must deal with him more severely than his custom, or his nature and inclination would lead him to do.

On this and another paper, which issued from Rome, written in the same strain, Luther published severe animadversions: but the emperor contented himself with a brief and general reply, couched however in terms which were not suited to give the protestants a favourable impression of his intentions towards them.

This strong remonstrance of the pope, with the fear of driving him to throw himself entirely into the arms of the king of France, is thought to have had influence, in connexion with other causes, in inducing the emperor hastily to conclude a peace, within three or four months after he had, with so much pains, and at the expence of so great concessions, prevailed upon his German subjects heartily to second him in the French war. Accordingly we shall find, that from the period of this peace with France a new line of policy, big with important events to the protestants, was adopted; and indeed that provision was made in the treaty itself for its being acted upon conjointly both by Charles and Francis.

But our attention must first be drawn to the zealous and determined efforts of the archbishop of Cologne in the cause of the reformation.

Herman, count de Wied, descended from an ancient and illustrious family bearing that title, had been appointed archbishop of Cologne, and in virtue of that dignity an elector of the empire, in the year 1515. He was previously bishop of Paderborn. Even

Maimbourg gives him the character, before he became infected with the mania of the reformation, of "a good man, of mild manners, very charitable to the poor, and zealous for the catholic faith." The last of these virtues, it seems, he had evinced in a striking manner on taking possession of the bishopric of Paderborn; for, finding that Lutheranism had obtained some footing there, he forcibly expelled the preachers, and denounced the penalty of death against such as should continue to profess that doctrine. In the year 1536, we find him holding a provincial council, at the desire of his people, and summoning all the bishops belonging to his jurisdiction, namely those of Liege, Utrecht, Munster, Osnaburg, and Minden. This council made several canons concerning doctrine and ceremonies, which were afterwards compiled into a book by John Gropper, archdeacon of Cologne, the reputed author of the book submitted by the emperor at the late conference at Ratisbon, and one of the three collocutors nominated by him on that occasion. Maimbourg pronounces these canons admirably adapted "for the preservation of pure religion, good discipline, and correct manners:" the judgment of Sleidan and Melancthon however was, that they "palliated almost all the popish tenets, and coloured them with new interpretations." This was a remedy little adapted to the exigencies of the diocese of Cologne, which by the testimony of the archbishop himself was in a deplorable state of ignorance, superstition, and vice.

Accordingly the book gave no satisfaction; and the archbishop, in proportion as his light increased, grew displeased with it. Hence he three years afterwards sent a confidential person to Melancthon to confer with him, and to invite him to visit the archbishop that they might consult together concerning further reformation. Melancthon commended his design, and suggested important advice, but did not visit Cologne till some years afterwards.

After the late conferences at Ratisbon, it appears Gropper mightily commended Bucer to the archbishop, as "of all men the fittest to be entrusted with the reformation of religion, as he was both very learned, a lover of peace, and of good and upright life:" on which the archbishop, who had some previous knowledge of him, sent for him to Cologne, where he was "most courteously received, particularly by Gropper; and, on parting with him, the archbishop made him promise to return when he should again send for him." Bucer, in letters to the landgrave, declared, that Gropper either sincerely assented to the evangelical doctrine, or with solemn asseverations pretended it.

The recess of Ratisbon (in which the pope's legate had concurred,) having enjoined on all prelates to promote "a holy reformation in their several provinces and dioceses"—which however was afterwards explained to mean a reformation of manners only, and not of doctrines or ceremonies—the archbishop availed himself of it, and called a convention of his states, to take into consideration the complying with this authoritative recommendation. It was resolved that the work should be proceeded in: and the archbishop appointed persons to draw up a scheme of reformation, and to select able and faithful ministers to occupy the churches. When the plan was prepared, he sent it to the clergy of Cologne, desiring their judgment upon it, according to the sacred scriptures: but they shewed no disposition to comply with his demand. After a sufficient time therefore had elapsed, and nothing was to be expected from them, he again sent for Bucer in 1542, and appointed him to preach at Bonn, the seat of the archiepiscopal residence. He soon after called another convention of the states; but the clergy sent no deputies to it: the other orders however encouraged him to proceed, with the assistance of such persons as he might think proper to select. Accordingly having solicited the elector

of Saxony and the landgrave of Hesse to send to him for a time Melancthon and Pistorius, he associated them with Bucer; and thus employed those very divines, whom the emperor had selected as the protestant collocutors at Ratisbon, to prepare his formulary of doctrine, of ceremonies, and of discipline.

Melancthon gives the following account of the proceedings after the book of reformation was drawn up. "The aged prelate ordered the whole book to be read over to him in the presence of his coadjutor (Schaumburg), count Stolberg the dean, several other principal persons, and myself. He listened to it with the closest attention, and discoursed much, in a serious and forcible manner, on many parts of it: some he, with good reason, altered according to his own judgment, and on others, after discussion, he preferred our opinion to his own. To this employment he devoted a whole week, spending in it four or five successive hours every morning. I could not but admire the assiduity of the venerable man; and I was struck with the seriousness with which he conducted the whole business;—and of how much consequence *that is*, I need not tell you. He is become quite an acute judge in these controversies."

When he had thus carefully examined the book himself, he sent it to the clergy of Cologne, determined to be wanting in no attention to them; and then laid it before a convention of the states, desiring each order to appoint persons to consult together, and give their judgment upon it. The clergy however, led by the canons of the cathedral church, (high spirited men, all of them of noble families,) insisted that Bucer and the other preachers, whom the people flocked to hear, should be in the first instance dismissed, and desired time to be allowed them to examine the book, though they would not join the other orders in deliberating upon it. With the first of these demands the archbishop refused to comply, unless they could prove anything against

the persons whom they wished to be removed: in the second he indulged them, though he saw their design. Accordingly the course they took was, to publish, in opposition to the archbishop's book, a work entitled *Antididagma*, in the preface to which, "after a great deal of railing against the Lutherans, they professed in plain terms, that they would rather live under the Turk, than under a magistrate who should embrace and defend that reformation."

This work likewise is ascribed to Gropper, both by Sleidan and Maimbourg. Another indecent book also was published about the same time, in the name of "the secondary clergy of Cologne," professedly against Bucer, but in reality against the reformation at large.

While these things were going on, the archbishop attended in person the diet of Spires in 1544, and there expressed his sentiments with great freedom. "Reformation," he said, "was a duty incumbent not only upon ecclesiastical but upon civil rulers, and both one and the other sinned grievously if they postponed it even for an hour. For his own part, he was determined to go forward in the course on which he had entered; and he thought it a general rule, that, if the bishops would not do it, the princes ought to take the lead in this cause of indispensable necessity."

The next step which his refractory clergy took, was to threaten him with an appeal to the pope and the emperor. They accordingly exhibited heavy charges against the archbishop, as subverting the established order of the church, and forcing upon his clergy and people the doctrines and practices of the Lutheran heresy; and moreover as "introducing every where lewd and profligate wretches under the character of teachers of religion." Having made him acquainted with this appeal, and received his answer, that he "had done nothing but what was his duty, and that he was determined to proceed in those things which

concerned the glory of God and the reformation of the church ;" they formally signed and transmitted their appeal, procuring the bishops of Liege and Utrecht, and the university of Louvain to concur with them in it, and excluding from the right of voting, as accused persons, such of their own number as disagreed with them.

The canons of Cologne, at the suggestion of the pope and the emperor, sent a deputation to Herman, again urging him to abandon his designs, and, in case he refused to do so, renouncing their allegiance to him. He promptly told them, that it was " not in their power to release themselves from the obligation of their oaths, and that the pretence to do so was a matter of very ill example." For the rest, after taking time to advise with counsellors, he answered, " That he had not hitherto acted without consideration, or from levity of mind ; but that for more than fifteen years past he had been deliberating with his friends on the means of correcting the abuses of the church, and particularly the intolerable corruptions of the court of Rome: that he had hoped that the pope or the emperor, moved by the complaints of such multitudes of persons aggrieved by these evils, would have found some remedy for them, either by a council or through the diet ; but that this had hitherto been prevented by the artifices of Rome herself: that, being now grown an old man, who had need to care seriously for the peace of his conscience and the salvation of his soul, he had diligently applied himself to the study of the holy scriptures and other pious writings, and had had recourse to the counsels of learned men ; and that he had thus become convinced, by the clearest evidence from the word of God, that that doctrine, which in all the successive diets the pope and others had vehemently opposed, was indeed pure, pious, apostolic, and divine truth : that he could not recede from it and from the word of God, but would steadfastly persist in his purpose,

though it should be at the risk of his possessions, his dignities, and his life itself; for that he felt his own eternal salvation, and that of multitudes beside, to be at stake in the present cause: that in all external and civil affairs, not contrary to the express will of God, the emperor should find him most dutiful and compliant: that he felt a confidence of obtaining a testimony from all persons, that in the station assigned him by providence he had, during so long a term of years, conducted himself in such a manner that no one had just cause of complaint against him." He further affirmed, that "in prosecuting his plan of reformation, he had brought no burden of expence upon the archiepiscopal revenues, but had supported twelve or fifteen preachers in his province at his own charge, and chiefly from his private patrimony, without their receiving any stipend from the funds of the church: and, if for what he had done in this most righteous, religious, and truly honourable cause, he was now, in his extreme old age, to be still infested as he had hitherto been by the opposition of his canons, and should thus eventually, either by force or fraud, be despoiled of his office and dignity, he left that to God, the supreme and righteous judge: nor would it be at all grievous to him if, as he had been born, so he should die, simply count of Wied: his family would receive and support him for his remaining days: but he would testify by public writings, both his own and those of the learned men with whom he had advised, that he had avowed and defended pure doctrine, as his solemn engagements bound him to do; and that he had most anxiously desired, that his provinces might be rescued from the complicated idolatry in which they were involved, and receive the right knowledge of Jesus Christ."

Still however the archbishop continued to be harassed by addresses from the pope, the other archbishops of Germany, the doctors of Louvain, and the emperor's ministers. At length, in the diet of Worms,

held in the year 1545, where Gropper appeared and heavily accused the archbishop, the emperor received the appeal against him; took the canons of Cologne under his protection, forbidding any one, under pain of proscription, to molest them in their religion, their revenues, or their rights; commanded them to proceed against the professors of the protestant faith; and cited Herman himself to appear before him within thirty days, either personally or by his proctor, to answer the charges laid against him. This was immediately followed by a similar citation from the pope requiring Herman, with the dean of Cologne, and five others of the canons, who, says Sleidan, "loved the archbishop, and disapproved the deed of the rest," to appear, in like manner, at Rome within sixty days, to give account of their conduct before the tribunal of his holiness.

To the former of these citations Herman answered, by sending his proctor to the emperor at Brussels, though by his electoral privileges he was not obliged to make any appearance out of the limits of the empire. It seems also that the emperor, in his way from Worms, saw him personally, and significantly reminded him that "his archiepiscopal dignity depended on the will of the pope, and that from it the electorate was inseparable." Herman however was still firm, and insisted upon it that he had done no more than his duty required; and declared that, "as great numbers of his people had heard with profit the preachers whom he had introduced, he could not in conscience remove them."

To the citation of the pope it does not appear that he made any answer at all; while the clergy vigorously prosecuted their appeal. In consequence, on the 16th of April 1546, the pope pronounced sentence of deprivation and excommunication against him; released his subjects from their allegiance, and discharged them from yielding him any obedience in future. He at the same time appointed Adolphus

count Schaumburg, his successor—a person whom the archbishop had long before made his coadjutor, and who had been “always as dear to him as a brother.” The emperor was called upon to see this decree carried into effect: but, as his schemes against the protestants were not yet fully ripe for execution, and the archbishop refused to surrender his office, alleging that he “could not do it with a safe conscience,” it slept for some little time longer. But in January 1547, the emperor having then obtained great advantages over the protestants, and being prepared to execute the decree by force of arms, Herman, in order to save his country from becoming the scene of war and bloodshed, consented to resign, (though most of his states, except the clergy, seemed ready to support him,) and Schaumburg on the 25th of that month took possession of his place and dignity. Thus had Herman the honour of being the first sovereign prince in Germany, (though not the last,) that lost his dignities and dominions in the cause of the blessed reformation; and Charles gave the first specimen of the use he would make of that unlimited power at which he aspired, in deposing a venerable old man, who twenty-seven years before had been one of those who raised him to the imperial throne!

The deprived archbishop retired to his native country, where he lived in privacy between five and six years, till his death, on the 13th of August, 1552, at the age of eighty years. He continued “obstinate in his heresy” to the last, says Maimbourg: but Sleidan’s account will doubtless be thought by the reader less prejudiced, as well as more pleasing. “He had such an end,” says that faithful historian, “as he desired; for many times he had wished, that he might either be permitted to propagate the gospel, and reform the church within his territories, or else to lead a private life: and, being sometimes admonished by his friends, that he drew upon himself great hatred and ill-will by changing his religion, he used

to answer, That nothing could take him by surprise, for he had long since made up his mind for all events."

The mighty change which had taken place in the good archbishop, since he was a persecutor at Paderborn, may even remind us of that which converted Saul of Tarsus into an apostle of the faith "which once he destroyed." His meekness is confessed even by his enemies; his humility and piety, were in many instances conspicuous, and in none more so than in the manner in which he bore adversity; and the spectacle of an old man, whose constitutional failing had perhaps been timidity, raised to all the vigour, the exertion, and the resolution, which we have witnessed—prepared to brave all dangers, and to make the most costly sacrifices in the cause of truth and duty—is delightful to contemplate, and shews how divine grace can change and exalt the human character.

Herman had declined on various accounts to join the league of Smalkald; yet so much were the confederates attached to him, that they repeatedly interposed in his behalf; and they finally determined to support him, had they been able to stand themselves. Among the persons deprived with him were count Stolberg, the dean, and Herman's own brother Frederic, who had for ten years held the bishopric of Munster, but resigned it in 1532, because he could not there carry things according to his conscience. He at this time held the provostship of Bonn, which Gropper obtained in addition to his other benefices, in reward of the part he had acted.—Under the administration of the new archbishop, the reformation which had been introduced was wholly set aside; the preachers expelled; and all that excessive superstition of which Melancthon had complained, and which gave to Cologne the appellation of "the Rome of Germany," was restored.¹

¹ Herman's Scheme of Reformation, drawn up by Bucer and Melancthon, which forms a good-sized 12mo. or 8vo. volume, was

The history of the bishop of Munster is a counterpart of that of the archbishop of Cologne, except that his canons shewed less virulent hostility against him, and that it seems not certain that he stood equally firm to the last. The bishopric of Munster is one of the most extensive and powerful in Germany; and, in addition to it, Francis count Waldeck, (the same who in the year 1535 subdued the anabaptists,) possessed the bishoprics of Osnaburg and Minden. Several years before, strong measures had been adopted by the senate for establishing the reformed doctrine in the *city* of Munster. The protestants presented to the senate a list of the errors of popery under thirty heads, pledging themselves to support their charges against any persons that might undertake to refute them. The senate called upon the clergy to maintain their tenets against the innovators, and, on their failing to do so, required them to resign their pulpits to the new teachers. The clergy retired from the city in disgust, and in concert with their bishop commenced some hostile proceedings against the senate and citizens. These differences, however, were composed by a treaty, in which the landgrave of Hesse, as well as the bishop of Munster, took a part, and by which six churches in the city were ceded to the protestants, and their antagonists left in undisturbed possession of the cathedral.

Even at that time the bishop appears not to have been indisposed to reformation; but the phrensy of the anabaptists under John of Leyden and other leaders succeeded, and threw all things into confusion. Ten years after, in the year 1544, after having for some time connived at the preaching of the evangelical doctrine in the principal cities under his jurisdiction, Francis openly recommended reformation to the assembly of his states. The chapters

translated into English, and twice printed in London; the second edition in 1548.

of canons opposed him, acting in concert with those of Cologne, and avowing their determination to adhere to an imperial mandate which they had received, enjoining them to withstand all innovations. The bishop however alleged the decree of Ratisbon, and said that "it was incumbent upon him, both in pursuance of that decree, and by his rights and duties as a prince, to see that the people of his province were instructed in Christian truth and duty by competent preachers. He felt the necessity of having pastors who should explain to the people the doctrine of repentance and remission of sins, and teach them to observe all things that Christ had commanded: for he had found, with great pain, that just notions of repentance scarcely existed among them; and that they were so ill informed as to seek the divine favour through the medium of images, relics, and ceremonies which they did not understand, while faith in Christ (with which contrition for sin, charity, and good works were inseparably connected,) was utterly disregarded. The sacraments, moreover, which ought to be administered and received with that just understanding of their nature and design, and with that faith and devotion, that men might by means of them be really united to Christ, and strengthened in faith more and more, were irreverently and shamefully abused; while the basest simony and grasping at gain were every where practised. In other rites and ceremonies of the church also, in the singing and the prayers, which ought all to be conducted to the instruction and edification of the people, the clergy themselves did not understand what they sang or read: all was gone through without the heart being engaged in it, and without improvement either to themselves or others. All this was highly offensive to God, and condemned by the inspired writers. The lives of the clergy also were shamefully corrupt. By these, and other weighty causes, he said, he had been induced, in virtue of his

office, to make some commencement of reformation, by the pure preaching of the word of God, and the administration of the sacraments according to their original appointment, in some parts of his territories; and he now trusted that he should have the support of his states in carrying the same into effect generally. He doubted not that he should be able to justify his proceedings to the emperor. But, if he were disappointed in these hopes, and should have to encounter the same sort of difficulties as had fallen to the lot of prophets, apostles, and the servants of God in all ages, his states would remember the answer made to the Jewish council, 'We ought to obey God rather than men:' and it would be much more tolerable for him to draw down upon himself the displeasure of men than the anger of God. In all civil matters however he would always be ready to perform due service to the emperor, as he had hitherto done."

The proposals, thus piously and forcibly urged, met the approbation of all the orders except the clergy; who still expressed their determination to adhere to the emperor's directions. They would not however, they said, now enter into dispute with their bishop; but they trusted they should still be left in possession of the cathedral church, to conduct the service and ceremonies there according to their own sentiments. The bishop replied, "That neither would he move disputes with them; that with pious and benevolent intentions he aimed at the reformation of abuses; that he should employ no force against those who declined to comply with his wishes; but that he would not depart from his purpose of introducing reformation, and the preaching of the true gospel of Christ."

These were the bright prospects of the province in the year 1544. Soon after that, the pope succeeded in stirring up the emperor to take more decisive measures against the reformation: the Smalkaldic war followed, and the good designs of the bishop of Mun-

ster were frustrated. In the year 1547 he was cited to Rome by the pope, to answer the charge of defection from the catholic faith: but the canons on this occasion interposed their good offices on his behalf, urging particularly the services he had formerly rendered in the suppression of the anabaptists. Hence he is supposed to have yielded improperly to the prevailing torrent, after Charles's triumph over the protestant powers. If so, we may trust that he was "chastened of the Lord, that he might not be condemned with the world:" for he afterwards suffered in the conflicts which arose among his neighbours, and the more severely for his former close alliance with the landgrave: he was plundered of his wealth, and even lost his bishoprics; and was reduced to live as an exile in his own city of Munster, dependent on the liberality of the citizens. He died July 15, 1553. Chytræus commends him as a prince of high character, distinguished for piety, wisdom, justice, and clemency.—Munster is to be added to the list of those places in which the light of the reformation was extinguished again, ere it had well dawned upon the people.

In other places however happier success still attended the efforts made to diffuse the knowledge of divine truth, and to correct the abuses which prevailed. The town and adjoining district of Ruthen in Voightland, the city and district of Rotenburg, and the principality of Henneberg, both in Franconia, are particularly mentioned. In the second of these places the reformation was almost universally embraced by the votaries in religious houses, as well as by other classes of the people; so that in the year 1546 no more than one monk and two aged nuns were found remaining. The zeal also of the inhabitants, and their eagerness to hear the word of God, are represented as very striking. Numbers fell on their knees in the churches, and with tears of joy thanked God for their deliverance from the superstition in which they had lived.

But the account of Henneberg is attended with the most interesting and remarkable particulars. William prince of that territory had been a zealous devotee in the cause of Romish superstition; the institutor of associations and observances designed to perpetuate it; and a persecutor of those who revolted from it: and, as was to be expected, he trained up his sons, three of whom he dedicated to the sacred office, in the same principles. His eldest son and successor however, George Ernest, attended the landgrave of Hesse to the diet of Augsburg in the year 1530: and there it pleased God that he should receive the seeds of divine truth, which gradually sprung up, and were afterwards cherished by the piety of his wife, Elizabeth, daughter of Eric duke of Brunswick and of Elizabeth of Brandenburg, before mentioned. Poppo also, another son of William's, and a canon of Wurtzburg, disgusted with the lives of the higher popish clergy, (of which his situation had given him sufficient experience,) and impressed with the piety of his brother, became equally inclined with him to the cause of reformation: and, little as such an event might have been anticipated, they prevailed upon their father, whose mind we must suppose to have undergone a gradual but great change, not only to yield to their wishes, but heartily to concur with them. The assistance of John Forster, a pious divine of Wittemberg, was solicited and obtained; and the protestant faith was in the year 1544 publicly professed. William, as he was a late, so he proved a zealous and persevering labourer in the cause. Aided by his sons, he settled the ecclesiastical affairs of his principality in an excellent order: and so determined a spirit did he shew, that, when the protestant confederation was broken and crushed, and all men were trembling before the power of the emperor, he resolutely refused the Interim (a corrupt mixture of popery and protestantism,) prescribed by that potentate in the year 1548. He even wrote to

him early in the year following to this effect: "That he had the fullest conviction, that nothing was taught in the churches of his principality which was not clearly contained in the holy scriptures, commanded to be taught by our only Saviour Jesus Christ, and received in the primitive and apostolic church. That these things he and those connected with him embraced, and would confess in the face of the whole world, at the risk of their fortunes and their lives. That, in all other respects, he had no more anxious desire than to discharge his duty to the emperor; and that the same was earnestly inculcated upon his people by their pastors." He begs therefore that he may not be required to receive the Interim; but that what he has already established in his province may remain undisturbed. He adds, that the emperor ought to conclude, that a man, who for temporal considerations would surrender what he was convinced in his own conscience was the truth and will of God, was not likely to prove faithful to his earthly superior.—Here again an open and manly avowal of principle proved to be the best policy. William remained undisturbed amid all the changes which took place: he lived till the year 1559, and then died, at the age of eighty one, in the pious and unwavering confession of the true faith of the gospel.

CHAPTER XXIV.

George prince of Anhalt—Bugenhagius Pomeranus—Diet of Worms—Council of Trent—Alarm of the Protestants—Their Leaders—Artifices of the Emperor—Diet and Conferences of Ratisbon—Preparations for War—Reformation of the Lower Palatinate, and of Leutkirk.

THE histories of some other eminent individuals present themselves under the period assigned to the chapter; and we will first lay them before the reader.

George prince of Anhalt is one of them. This excellent man appears to have been blessed with pious and judicious parents, to whose care of his education, though they were themselves to a considerable degree involved in the prevailing darkness and superstition, and though he lost his father at the early age of eight years, he afterwards felt himself to be deeply indebted. Of his mother, in particular, who was the granddaughter of the king of Bohemia, we shall find him taking very pleasing notice. He was born in the year 1507, and being a younger son was destined for the church. After the death of his father, he was placed under the care of George Heldus, or Heltus, of Forcheim, a learned and pious instructor at Leipzig; who had also Joachim Camerarius and Caspar Cruciger for his scholars. Under his instruction, George laid the foundation of a degree of learning in those days very uncommon in persons

of his rank in life. He subsequently applied to the study of jurisprudence, and at the age of twenty two was admitted into the council of the archbishop of Mentz and Magdeburg; in which station, in consequence of his talents and eloquence, he was employed in much important business. Five years however before this time, when he had attained only the age of seventeen, he had been made provost of the cathedral church of Magdeburg: and, becoming deeply interested in the theological questions, which were so much agitated, he applied himself to the study of the scriptures and the fathers; still availing himself of the suggestions of his old tutor, Heltus. In order to read the sacred writings with greater advantage, he diligently cultivated the knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew languages; in the latter of which his proficiency is particularly praised. But of these his theological studies, and of the result of them, we must attend to the very interesting account which he himself has given us.

It is remarkable, that he had for the guardians of his youth three of the most devoted supporters of the papal superstition, and opponents of the protestant cause, that the age produced—Albert archbishop of Mentz, Joachim I. elector of Brandenburg, and George duke of Saxony. These, of course, opposed every obstacle to his approximation to the sentiments of Luther: and it is to his correspondence with the bigoted duke of Saxony, extending from the year 1533 to 1539, that we are indebted for the fullest account of the progress of his religious inquiries.

“With good conscience,” he declares, “he could say with S. Paul, that from his early youth he had felt an ardent zeal for the law of his fathers; for the ceremonies, the customs, and the doctrines in which he had been brought up. Against those principles, therefore, which were opposed to them, and tended, as he conceived, to subvert every good institution, and to introduce all sorts of evil, he had cherished

the most uncompromising hostility. But all the time he was acting only upon hearsay and *ex parte* evidence: for he avoided, with a degree of horror, the reading of books which he understood to be surcharged with poison. He began however to reflect, that, as a member of the church and of the ecclesiastical order, it behoved him to employ himself in a more efficient manner in opposing the dangerous efforts of those who were enemies to both. He determined therefore to lay aside for a time more amusing and more lucrative pursuits, and, as far as his indispensable engagements would permit, to apply himself to the study of the scriptures and of ancient ecclesiastical writers, whom, he was confidently persuaded, he should find interpreting the scriptures in a widely different manner from the modern innovators. Accordingly he had recourse to the doctors and the canons of the church, with no other view than that of triumphantly exposing the errors of the new teachers. But, he exclaims, O God, what shall I say? When I examined on all sides and in all parts the writings of the approved doctors, and the ancient canons, I could no where find that interpretation, and those traditions which I sought, and of which I had boasted; nor, when I applied to persons who had the authority of the fathers constantly in their mouths, could they point out any thing of the kind to me! On the contrary I discovered, not only that numberless practical abuses, repugnant to the scriptures and the determinations of the fathers, were defended among us, but that we had departed widely indeed from the pure Christian doctrine. I saw that many articles taught by the fathers, and sanctioned by councils, were now restored and brought to light again, after a long oblivion, by those very teachers whom we were denouncing as heretics: and that the reasonings, by which our doctors now opposed them, were precisely those of the ancient heretics upon similar questions, which the fathers of the church

had refuted and rejected. However it was to be accounted for, I saw that it might be demonstrated from these writings, and especially from those of Augustine against the Pelagians, that, in the principal points now in controversy, the sentiments of our writers differed little from the dogmas of the heretics; as, for instance, on the article of justification, on the cause of salvation, on free will, human merits, the grace of God and the remission of sins, faith, good works, and other topics connected with them. In these I clearly perceived that many things, which Augustine maintained in opposition to those heretics, are now condemned by the monks and their adherents; while those very fundamental principles of the heretical doctrines are asserted, which Augustine most zealously opposed.—But Almighty God, of his infinite mercy, ever kept alive in my heart that spark of divine light, kindled by himself, which led me to acknowledge that our salvation is by his grace, and not for our merits. I also frequently recalled to mind the discourse on the subject of salvation, which, with great pleasure, I had heard from my dear uncle, Adolphus bishop of Mersburg, a little before his death. A preacher having before him said much of human merits, and extolled them highly, the good bishop severely reproved him, citing the words of the psalmist, ‘In thy sight shall no man living be justified.’ Thrice he repeated and urged the exclusive terms, ‘No man—no man living.’ And he himself at length departed this life in peace, in this very confidence in the divine mercy, and not in any merits of his own.—In like manner, I remembered that my much loved mother held fast this article with an unwavering faith; of which I not only have the testimony in her own hand-writing, but I could myself give evidence to the fact, from having been present with her to the time when she drew her last breath.

“The consequence of all this was, when I found that the persons on whom I had unduly relied, and

who hesitated not to pass off all their own notions as the decisions of the church, had erred so widely from the truth of the scriptures, the sentiments of the fathers, and the determinations of the holy catholic church in this article, which is the very basis of all Christian doctrine, I was not a little disturbed and terrified."—He then goes on to state some further considerations which shook his confidence in these teachers, particularly their making so light of the holy scriptures. But yet, he confesses, he was strongly prejudiced against the Lutherans, from the persuasion that their doctrine was subversive of all good works and good order, and from the number of sects to which they seemed to give occasion. He calls God to witness, how many sleepless nights he had passed, and what anguish he had suffered, while his mind was held in suspense. Still however he adhered to his principle, that our dependence must be upon grace, and not on our own merits: other points he was willing to refer to the decision of a council.—This was about the period of the diet of Augsburg. But, when he had read the Confession of the protestants there presented, and saw that the representations which had been made to him of their religion did not correspond with it, he thought that they must have corrected some of their errors, and be meditating a return to the church. At the same time he was much pleased with what he found taught in the Confession, from S. Augustine, concerning free will and some other points. When afterwards he had read the Apology for the Confession, and had seen the decree of Augsburg, in which all the old abuses were sanctioned, and the errors of the various sects confounded with the doctrine of the protestants, and the whole condemned together, he became more and more convinced that the course adopted was unjustifiable.—He now had recourse to the writings of Luther; and he found that that reformer had only met with the same treatment that the ancient prophets

had done, who always had the assertors of human merits for their enemies. He does not deny that he was offended at the acerbity of Luther's manner of writing; yet he could not but admit the truth of his sentiments. He also called to mind another observation of his mother's, That she was surprised that the teachers, to whom she had been accustomed, spoke in no such impressive manner concerning the grace of Christ as the new preachers did: she confessed that she had become better instructed upon this subject from the writings of the latter than she had before been; and she hoped that the former would be brought to teach in this respect in the same manner. —It was a stumbling-block indeed to him, that so complete a reformation of manners did not follow; as he would have hoped: but then he clearly saw that this was not the fault either of the teachers or of the instruction given. With respect to the sects that arose after the reformation he reflected, that Luther could not be answerable for all which rash and heady spirits among his followers might advance; that the reformer had opposed such persons to the utmost of his ability; that it had been the reproach cast upon Christianity itself in the early ages, that it caused divisions and disturbances; that the boasted harmony, prior to the reformation, either did not exist, (for the discords of the monks had produced many tragical scenes,) or it was founded in ignorance and the toleration of all sorts of abuses; in short, it amounted only to this, that Satan had universal possession and 'his goods were in peace.' —As to the argument from the necessity of obeying the church, he considered, that the church was the spouse of Christ, and had not authority to enjoin any thing but from the word of her Lord; and therefore that due obedience was not violated by resistance to abuses. Nor was he moved by the reasoning, that, if those were indeed errors which Luther assailed, then God must have deserted his church for ages

past: for he perceived that, notwithstanding these errors and evils, God had still had a church, and persons who were members of it, as in the corrupt times of Israel: that he had, indeed, by a righteous but inscrutable judgment, for the punishment of the people's sins, permitted great darkness and corruption to prevail; but that they might expect still worse things to come upon them, if they should now shut their eyes against the light which had visited them. He reprobates the idea of rejecting the truth from mere prejudice against the person of Luther: nor would he, he says, allow himself to be influenced by the consideration, that the professors of the new doctrine might subject themselves to the loss of rank and wealth; for that things of that kind were not promised to Christians, and ought not to be desired by them: and, with respect to the hatred of men, he remembered the apostle's saying, 'If I were a man-pleaser, I should not be the servant of Jesus Christ.' He trusts in God, however, to make 'even his enemies to be at peace with him.'"

At the close of his correspondence with George of Saxony, he observes, that "he would not further harass a person who was now grown old, to whom he owed obligations, and whom on many accounts he highly respected; but that daily, as often as he repeated the words of the Lord's prayer, 'Thy will be done,' he prayed and would not cease to pray for him."—This was in the year 1538, only one year before the death of the duke.

The careful consideration of the statements now before us cannot but be both impressive and useful. Not only do they evince the integrity of George's mind; they shew also what would be the result of a candid examination to many others besides Roman-catholics, who now proceed very confidently under the influence of early prejudices, or in blind reliance upon what they esteem great authorities.

In the year 1541, at the time of the diet of Ratis-

bon, when hopes were entertained of an amicable arrangement between the contending parties, George addressed a letter to the emperor, containing a modest and respectful defence of the Confession of Augsburg. He entreated him not to lend an ear to the many charges brought against the protestants, but to examine the facts for himself. He urged his own case and that of his brothers: the most odious representations had been made to them, as if good works were decried, all good regulations subverted, and the floodgates of iniquity thrown open by the new doctrine. They had accordingly resisted it as impious, with all their might. But those who so represented it had created a distrust in their minds, by dissuading them from reading the scriptures, and examining into the grounds of things for themselves: and the princes afterwards discovered, that the representations of these persons were grossly false; and they felt it to be their duty, to give their subjects the benefit of the discoveries thus made. He entreats the emperor therefore, if he could not yet think the protestants right, that he would still preserve the peace, and not suffer any one to be injured for adherence to the Confession. When informed that the emperor had received and read his letter, he wrote again in acknowledgment, and sent him two tracts, one of them a protestant catechism, ("no doubt Luther's")—begging him not so much to inquire "who wrote them, as what they contained."

Two years afterwards he endeavoured to influence the mind of his kinsman and former guardian, the archbishop of Mentz, in a similar manner, and to induce him to suggest healing counsels to the emperor. He beseeches him to regard "the truth and eternal life" alone, in this important case, and not to lend himself to the designs of the pope. "If only," he says, "recourse could be had to the sure ground of scripture, instead of to human opinions, then, waving all unnecessary and doubtful points, we

might speedily have peace established in Germany, and throughout the Christian world." He conjures him to embrace and support whatever he was convinced was true and right, that he might never incur the sentence denounced against the servant who 'knew his Lord's will, and did it not.' Never was more appropriate advice given: for there seems no reason to doubt that the archbishop had convictions in favour of the reformation, and shewed himself, till after the diet of Augsburg, less averse to it than many others; though afterwards Luther considered him as a principal author of the hostile measures adopted against it.

Some months before this address to the archbishop, he had submitted to the chapter of Magdeburg, to which he belonged, a plan of reformation. He appeals to their deeds of foundation, "written in letters of gold, and splendidly ornamented," as declaring the end of their institution to be "the study and promotion of sound learning," in which the investigation of the holy scriptures and theological learning ought certainly to take the lead with them as churchmen. He cites the late decree of Ratisbon, which enjoined reformation on the diocesan: and urges that it behoved them, as the counsellors of their archbishop, to suggest to him the nature and means of that reformation; without which they would, in fact, soon lose all their influence over the people. He strikingly exposes the absurdity and even profaneness of private masses, in which the priest went through all the service, using the addresses, "The Lord be with you—Lift up your hearts unto the Lord—Take, eat," &c. when there were no communicants present.—This proposal for the reformation of the chapter of Magdeburg failed at that time, but it took effect a few years afterwards. George's writings prove him to have become a firm, zealous, able, yet mild and dignified assertor of all the great principles of the reformation.

In the year 1544 died the bishop of the important diocese of Mersburg ; and, by a strange abuse not uncommon in those times, Augustus, brother to Maurice duke of Saxony, though a layman, and only eighteen years of age, was unanimously elected his successor. The éléction however proved highly beneficial: for Augustus, being, like his brother, a friend to the reformation, and fettered by no other restriction than that of leaving the services of the cathedral church to the direction of the canons, appointed George of Anhalt, the senior of their number, to administer the ecclesiastical affairs of the diocese according to his own discretion, and with a liberal salary ; thus virtually conferring upon him all the peculiar powers of a bishop. Maurice, at the same time, made him ecclesiastical superintendent of Leipzig, and of such parts of Thuringia as belonged to his jurisdiction ; and he was already spiritual administrator of Misnia. Thus he was raised to a sphere of usefulness suited to his rank, his talents, and his piety ; and he occupied it for five years in a manner worthy of the high reputation he already enjoyed.

In the year 1549, after the imperial edict, called the Interim, had been published, Augustus of Saxony, having married Ann of Denmark, resigned the bishopric of Mersburg, and Heldingus, one of the three persons who had composed the Interim, was appointed his successor. The administration of George, of course, ceased : but in his capacity of senior canon, he still firmly supported the protestant interest in the diocese. Joined by some others of the canons, he claimed of the bishop a promise not to disturb the order of things which he found established ; not to introduce again the abrogated ceremonies ; nor to molest the married clergy. He supported this demand by urging certain irregularities attending the appointment of the new bishop, on the ground of which they might refuse to acknowledge him. In

deference however to the imperial authority, he would consent, he said, to overlook these, provided Heldingus would give him satisfaction as to the plan on which he meant to proceed in the government of the diocese. The bishop in consequence made fair promises ; but George, still cherishing a distrust which the event warranted, took care to have his protest recorded ; in which he disclaimed the authority of the bishop, and appealed to a free and Christian council, in case he should not act up to his present professions. Having done this, he said he would now attend him to the cathedral church, and join in imploring for him the grace and assistance of the Holy Spirit ; but still not pledging himself, by that concurrence in his inauguration, to acquiesce in any false doctrine which might be introduced.

George's apprehensions were soon realized. The bishop, being once established in power, forgot his promises ; began to promulgate the ancient errors ; and ere long openly professed his intention of restoring all things to their former state under the papacy. In consequence, George did not scruple to preach two elaborate sermons, with the avowed intention of publishing them, against the errors of the church of Rome, and in defence of protestant doctrines and principles. Some delay occurred in committing them to the press, but they were published in the year 1551, with a copious preface. They are both from the gospel for the eighth Sunday after Trinity, taken from the seventh chapter of St. Matthew ; the former a warning against false teachers, from ver. 15 ; the latter, a comparison of popery and protestantism as to their practical " fruits," from ver. 16. He here contrasts the prohibition of the scriptures, the neglect of the education of youth, and of the instruction of the people, (to a degree that even tended to bring back barbarism,) and many other evils among the papists, with the opposite system every where introduced by the protestants. In this connexion he

makes a splendid eulogium of Luther's translation of the whole scriptures "from the Hebrew and Greek originals," a version with which neither the Septuagint, nor the Vulgate, nor any other ancient one, however celebrated, could bear a comparison; and by means of which, he says, the inspired writers "spoke to the people of Germany, as clearly and intelligibly as if they had been born and brought up among them."

In the preface to some sermons on the sixteenth Psalm, he has preserved the following interesting memorandum concerning Luther. The reformer had visited George at Mersburg, and just before he took his leave, while sitting in his chair, he solemnly lifted up his hands and eyes, and said: "I thank my God, that I never discovered or proposed any new doctrine; but held fast the old and true one; and to the utmost of my power withstood all novelties, contrary to the ancient and genuine doctrine and faith of Christ, whether introduced by Jews, Turks, heretics, papists, sacramentarians, or anabaptists."—"These words," says George, "I heard with great pleasure, and was confirmed by them in my opinion of Luther, that he sought no innovation, but closely followed the scriptures, constantly adhered to the true faith, and censured nothing but errors in doctrine and corruptions in practice."

In the close of another work, on the sacrament, he quotes a letter of Eckius's, dated at Ingolstadt, in 1535, in which the writer confesses, that he "could not find that any pope had abolished the administration of the eucharist in both kinds, prior to the councils of Constance and Basil," in the fifteenth century: "but," adds Eckius, "as the church increased, and it became impossible that due reverence should be shewn to the sacrament amid such numbers of people, Christians, without any express injunction, in honour of the sacrament itself, withdrew, and were content with one kind: and this they

doubtless did by the suggestion of the Holy Ghost!—Such an avowal, in all its parts, from so hackneyed a champion of popish errors, cannot fail to make a due impression on the mind of every reflecting reader.

The excellent man, whose history, on account of its interesting nature, we have detailed at some length, died on the 17th of October, 1553, at the age of only forty-six years. He was of a weakly constitution, which he further impaired by incessant labours and studies. The sentiment of Seckendorf seems perfectly just, that few even of the most leading reformers are more deserving of our admiration than he was. Previously to his administration of Mersburg, he had, in conjunction with his brothers, introduced a quiet and peaceable, but very effectual reformation in the principality of Anhalt; and he continued to the end of his days to live on the best terms with the same beloved relatives, rendering them every assistance in the well-governing of their dominions. Considering his rank and attainments, he might have aspired to the highest dignities in the church; but he was content with what he had, and preferred “the reproach of Christ” to any worldly advancement. He lived unmarried, though he zealously contended for the liberty of marriage in the clergy. His end appears to have been eminently devout and peaceful.

The other eminent individual, of whom we have here some relation to offer, is John Bugenhagen of Pomerania; a person whose name has frequently occurred in these pages, and who had rendered many important services to the reformation. In the same year that George of Anhalt was made administrator of Mersburg, the bishopric of Camin, in his native country, was offered to Bugenhagen, and earnestly pressed upon his acceptance; and it appears that it was the *third* that had been thus proposed to him. But never did an

ambitious churchman more earnestly seek such a dignity, than he declined it; nor any disappointed aspirant more bitterly bewail his failure, than this good man did his having for a time consented to his own advancement. The deceased bishop was the very prelate who had driven Bugenhagen from his country, for preaching the reformed doctrine.¹ The nomination to the vacant see was vested in the reigning dukes Barnimus and Philip, both protestants; but they differed with some asperity concerning the person who should be appointed. At length they were prevailed with to agree upon Bugenhagen; and they sent a splendid embassy to Wittemberg to solicit him to accept the office, representing that in so doing he would meet the earnest wishes of the chapter and the whole province. The deputies added, that, in fact, his doing so was the only probable means of preventing the differences between the two dukes being decided by arms. This last consideration, seconded by the advice of the elector of Saxony, prevailed with Bugenhagen to yield a conditional assent: but he had no sooner done this, than he fell into a degree of melancholy, considering his conduct as both infatuated and sinful, and as permitted for the punishment of his other offences. He therefore mournfully entreated of God both pardon and deliverance: and, when the conditions which he had stipulated were not agreed to by the dukes, he gladly availed himself of the opportunity of retracting his consent. He offered however, if a bishop were first appointed, and the case required, to go and reorganize the reformation of Pomerania, which had first been established, in a considerable degree, under his direction. Bugenhagen lived nearly fourteen years after this time, and died in peace April 20, 1558.

We turn now to the general course of events at

¹ Vol. i. p. 204.

this momentous period. The time was now arrived when the emperor might begin to throw off the mask, and no longer temporize with the protestants. The restraint in which he had long been held with respect to them, and the bold and firm attitude which they had of late been enabled to assume, must have been highly irritating to him; but the circumstances of his other dominions, and his wars with the king of France and with the Turks, imposed on him a necessity to which he was compelled to submit. But peace was now concluded with the former potentate, and Charles entertained the hope, which was soon after realized, of making a satisfactory arrangement with the Sultan. He turned all his thoughts therefore to Germany; and with a view to the designs he cherished there, he had "by a private article, not inserted in the treaty of Crespy, that it might not raise any unseasonable alarm, agreed with Francis, that both should exert all their influence and power in order to procure a general council, to assert its authority, and to exterminate the protestant heresy out of their dominions."¹ Still however he had reason to proceed with caution. "He was sensible that the protestants, conscious of their own strength, but under continual apprehensions of his designs, had all the boldness of a powerful confederacy joined to the jealousy of a feeble faction; and were no less quick-sighted to discern the first appearance of danger, than ready to take arms in order to repel it."¹ Hence we shall find him still continuing, as long as he could do it, to veil his designs against them with the utmost artifice and duplicity.

The pope immediately after the peace of Crespy, summoned a general council to assemble at Trent early in the spring of 1545, and exhorted all Christian princes "to embrace the opportunity, that the present happy interval of tranquillity afforded them, of suppressing those heresies which threatened to

¹ Robertson.

subvert whatever was sacred or venerable among Christians." Charles affected some dissatisfaction at this: but, after such a slight expression of dislike as was necessary in order to cover his designs, he determined to sanction the council, which might become no inconsiderable instrument towards accomplishing his projects; and therefore not only appointed ambassadors to appear there in his name, but ordered the ecclesiastics in his dominions to attend at the time prescribed.

In the meanwhile the imperial diet, after several prorogations, was opened at Worms on the 25th of March, 1545. The protestants, who enjoyed the free exercise of their religion by a very precarious tenure, wished earnestly to establish that important privilege upon some firmer basis, and to hold it by a perpetual not by a temporary title. But, instead of offering them any additional security, Ferdinand opened the diet with observing, that there were two points, chiefly, which required consideration, the prosecution of the war against the Turks, and the state of religion; that the controversies about the latter were so intricate, and of such difficult discussion, as to give no hope of its being possible to bring them at present to any final issue; that a council, so long wished for, was at length appointed; that the time of its meeting was at hand, and both parties ought to wait for its decrees, and submit to them as the decisions of the universal church. The popish members of the diet received this declaration with great applause. The protestants expressed surprise at propositions, which were so manifestly repugnant to the recess of the former diet, and insisted that the questions with regard to religion, as first in dignity, and most nearly concerning them all, ought to come first under deliberation.

Ferdinand, by the emperor's command, adhered inflexibly to his first propositions, and would make no concessions which had the most remote tendency

to throw discredit on the council, or to weaken its authority. The protestants, on their part, were no less inflexible; and, after much time spent in fruitless endeavours to convince each other, the parties came to no agreement. Nor did the presence of the emperor, who arrived at Worms, on the 15th of May, contribute in any degree to render the protestants more compliant. Fully convinced that they were maintaining the cause of God and of truth, they shewed themselves superior to the allurements of interest, or the suggestions of fear; and, in proportion as the emperor redoubled his solicitations, or discovered his designs, their boldness seems to have increased. At last they openly declared, that they would not even deign to vindicate their tenets in the presence of a council, assembled not to examine but to condemn them; and that they would pay no regard to an assembly held under the influence of a pope, who had already precluded himself from all title to act as a judge, by having stigmatized their opinions with the name of heresy, and denounced against them the heaviest censures, which in the plenitude of his usurped power he could inflict. Maurice of Saxony alone shewed an inclination to gratify the emperor. Though he professed an inviolable regard to the protestant religion, he assumed an appearance of moderation peculiar to himself, by which he confirmed the favourable sentiments which the emperor already entertained of him, and gradually paved the way for executing the ambitious designs which always occupied his active and enterprising mind. Charles's schemes were not yet ripe for execution; and as he perceived that he could not hope either to procure present aid from the protestants against the Turks, or to quiet their fears and jealousies on account of their religion, he appointed a diet to be held at Ratisbon early in the next year, in order to adjust what was now left undetermined; and, previous to it, he agreed that a certain number of divines of each

party should meet, in order to confer upon the points in dispute. His conduct however in various other particulars (among which may be mentioned his taking, precisely at this period, the canons of Cologne under his protection in their opposition to their archbishop,) prevented this appearance of a desire to maintain the present tranquillity from imposing upon the protestants; and they began to entertain the most jealous solicitude for their own safety.

The recess of Spires had directed each of the two great religious parties to prepare a formulary of reformation, extending both to doctrines, ceremonies, and discipline; and of which concession towards their opponents, carried to the utmost limits that conscience would allow, was to be the leading principle; in order that, from the comparison of the two, to be made at the diet of Worms, it might be ascertained what hope existed of bringing the contending parties together, or of establishing some pacific compromise between them. Though this was in itself a sufficiently unpromising project, and, after the condemnation which the pope had pronounced of the whole proceeding, the catholics could never be expected to perform their part of the prescribed task; yet the elector thought it not right that the protestants should be wanting to their duty, or that they should lose this fresh opportunity of explaining their views, and shewing the moderation of their aims. Accordingly he called upon the divines of Wittemberg to prepare and submit to him such a document as was required. They lost no time in complying with the demand, and transmitted their plan in the month of January, 1545, signed by Luther, Bugenhagen, Cruciger, G. Major, and Melancthon. It is not necessary here to enlarge on its contents. Great piety, wisdom, and moderation seem to reign throughout the composition: but the event shewed that there was no sincerity in the proposals that had been made for a candid discussion of differences, and this project of

reformation, which had been prepared with the greatest care, was never called for by the diet.

In their correspondence with the elector on this occasion the Wittemberg divines complain, that their adversaries became more and more furious ; that this very year great numbers of persons, and among them some very wise and learned men, had been burned for their religion ; and that Ferdinand, notwithstanding his fair professions in Germany, had issued such edicts concerning religion as caused great distress to his Hungarian subjects.

Just at the close of the year 1545, the general council was opened with the accustomed solemnities at Trent. But neither the character of the assembly itself, nor the late period to which it was deferred, left any just hope of its producing those healing effects on the state of the church which many had anticipated from it. "The first session," says Dr. Robertson, "was spent in matters of form. In a subsequent one, it was agreed that the framing of a confession of faith, wherein should be contained all the articles which the church required its members to believe, ought to be the first and principal business of the council ; but that, at the same time, due attention should be given to what was necessary towards the reformation of manners and discipline. From this first symptom of the spirit with which the council was animated, from the high tone of authority which the legates who presided in it assumed, and from the implicit deference with which most of the members followed their directions, the protestants conjectured with ease what decisions they might expect. It astonished them, however, to see forty prelates (for no greater number were yet assembled,) assume authority as representatives of the universal church, and proceed to determine the most important points of doctrine in its name." As soon as the confederates of Smalkald received information of the opening of the council,

they published a long manifesto, containing a renewal of their protest against its meeting, together with the reasons which induced them to decline its jurisdiction.

In the meantime, the protestant princes continued to receive intelligence from different quarters, all suited still more to alarm their fears. The king of England informed them, that the emperor, having long resolved to exterminate their opinions, would not fail to employ this interval of tranquillity, which he now enjoyed, as the most favourable juncture for carrying his design into execution. The merchants of Augsburg, as intimated on a former occasion, received advice, by means of their correspondents in Italy, among whom were some who secretly favoured the protestant cause, that a dangerous confederacy against it was forming between the pope and the emperor. In confirmation of this, they heard from the Low-Countries that Charles had issued orders, though with every precaution which could keep the measure concealed, for raising troops both there and in other parts of his dominions. The deputies of the confederates in consequence assembled at Francfort, and, by communicating their intelligence and sentiments to each other, reciprocally heightened their sense of the impending danger. But neither the union, the promptitude, or the wisdom of their counsels, was such as their situation required, or as the preparations of their enemies rendered necessary.

Of this subject however, and of the protestant leaders generally, our justly admired historian of Charles V. here makes a representation which needs, I think, to be considerably qualified, and on which I shall submit to the reader a few remarks. Occasions of jealousy and discord had no doubt arisen, and the union of the parties was by no means so entire as might have been wished: but Dr. Robertson's statement is suited to make a much stronger impression upon this subject, than the authors to whom he refers

us produce. Particularly he seems to convey too unfavourable an idea of the elector of Saxony, as compared with the landgrave; and too nearly to concur in the opinion which he represents the latter as entertaining of the former, namely, that, however "upright" a man he might be, he was "fettered by narrow prejudices, unworthy of a prince called to act a chief part in a scene of such importance." No doubt, as a general, a politician, a man of the world, the landgrave might be much the elector's superior: but in all other respects there could be no comparison between the two characters. For deliberate wisdom, for sound judgment, and above all for piety and virtue; for the qualities which fitted him to be the head of a religious association, *previously* to a state of actual warfare, and to do honour to the body whose counsels he regulated; the elector must decidedly bear away the palm. It is true, his attachment to every tenet and portion of Lutheranism might be carried to excess—might be what many, with Dr. Robertson, would call it, "bigoted and superstitious:" but it was not a blind attachment: he had closely studied what he thus firmly embraced; and his adherence to it was the result of conscientious conviction; and likewise of a just apprehension of the difficulty of knowing where to stop, if once we begin to give way in such questions, and in such times, as those in which he was conversant. And, if he did think "that the concerns of religion are to be regulated by principles and maxims—different from those" by which "the common affairs of life" are, in point of fact, at least, usually managed, is he much to be blamed for this opinion?—Luther was not on all occasions thought, either by his friends or his enemies, to be so much a "stranger to the rules of political conduct," as Dr. R. supposes: the latter sometimes bring charges of an opposite nature against him.—That either the elector or Luther should have refused to unite with the reformed Swiss,

on account of their difference from them on the subject of the eucharist, (there was no other material article, much less "several essential articles of faith," on which they differed,) must be again lamented, as a humbling instance of the weakness and obliquity of human nature; but that they should have "refused to enter into any confederacy," for the defence of the protestant religion in Germany, with the king of France, who was permitting, at least, the most bloody persecution of that religion in his own dominions, and had actually conspired with the emperor for its general suppression; or that they should have been unwilling "to solicit the friendship" of the king of England, who, as the elector observed, "sought nothing but his own interest and aggrandisement, had done nothing in the way of reformation, except making himself head of the church in the pope's stead,¹ and at the same time cruelly persecuted pious Christians, and himself lived a flagitious life:"—neither of these circumstances, I think, can be censured or regretted by any one, who considers the exclusive object of the German league, or feels properly for the honour of the sacred cause which it was designed to support. In these several particulars we must dissent from, or at least materially qualify the sentiments which Dr. Robertson appears to convey.

The dishonourable length to which the emperor carried his artifices to delude the protestants at this period, may be judged of from the following instances. Not only did he allow Granvelle, his chief minister, to assure the landgrave, in return to some pressing questions which he had proposed, "that the intelligence they had received of the emperor's military preparations was exaggerated, and all their

¹ However innocent the sense in which the king's majesty is now held to be "the head of the church," (see Church Art. xxxvii,) it appears clear, that Henry VIII. meant fully to succeed to the pope's place and prerogative within his own dominions.

suspicious destitute of foundation; that, though, in order to guard his frontiers against any insult of the French or English, he had commanded a small body of men to be raised in the Low-Countries, he was as solicitous as ever to maintain tranquillity in Germany:"¹ not content with this, he "contrived to have a personal interview with the landgrave; and to him he made such warm professions of his concern for the happiness of Germany, and of his aversion to all violent measures; he denied, in such express terms, his having entered into any league, or having begun any military preparations which should give any just cause of alarm to the protestants, as seem to have dispelled all the landgrave's doubts and apprehensions, and sent him away fully satisfied of his pacific intentions. This artifice was of great advantage, and effectually answered the purpose for which it was employed:"¹ it induced the protestants to conclude it unnecessary to take any immediate measures against danger, which appeared to be distant or imaginary.

"Such events, however, soon occurred, as staggered the credit which the protestants had given to the emperor's declarations. The council of Trent, though still composed of a small number of Italian and Spanish prelates, without a single deputy from many of the kingdoms which it assumed a right of binding by its decrees, proceeded to settle articles of the greatest importance. Having begun with examining the first and chief point in controversy between the church of Rome and the reformers, concerning the rule which should be held as supreme and decisive in matters of faith, the council, by its infallible authority, determined, that the books, to which the designation of *apocryphal* has been given, are of equal authority with those which were received by the Jews and primitive Christians into the sacred

¹ Robertson.

canon; that the *traditions* handed down from the apostolic age, and preserved in the church, are entitled to as much regard as the doctrines and precepts which the inspired authors have committed to writing; that the Latin translation of the scriptures, made or revised by St. Jerome, and known by the name of the *Vulgate* translation, should be read in churches, and appealed to in the schools as authentic and canonical. Against all who disclaimed the truth of these tenets, anathemas were denounced in the name and by the authority of the Holy Ghost. The decision of these points, which undermined the main foundation of the Lutheran system, was a plain warning to the protestants what judgment they might expect, when the council should have leisure to take into consideration the particular and subordinate articles of their creed. This discovery of the council's readiness to condemn the opinions of the protestants was soon followed by a striking instance of the pope's resolution to punish such as embraced them"—in the deprivation and excommunication of the archbishop of Cologne. "The countenance which he had given to the Lutheran heresy was the only crime imputed to that prelate, as well as the only reason assigned to justify the extraordinary severity of this decree. The protestants could hardly believe that Paul, how zealous soever he might be to defend the established system, or to humble those who invaded it, would have ventured to proceed to such extremities against a prince and elector of the empire, without having previously secured such powerful protection, as would render his censure something more than an impotent and despicable sally of resentment. They were of course deeply alarmed at this sentence against the archbishop; and their fears revived with such violence as is natural to men roused from a false security, and conscious of having been deceived."

And here we must advert to an event deeply in-

teresting to every protestant, of the present as well as of that remote period; into the particulars of which, as thus interesting to us all, we shall presently enter with considerable minuteness. I refer to the death of Luther. In the words of Dr. Robertson: "While appearances of danger daily increased, and the tempest which had been so long gathering was ready to break forth in all its violence against the protestant church, Luther was saved by a seasonable death, from feeling or beholding its destructive rage. Having gone, though in a declining state of health, and during a rigorous season, to his native city of Eisleben, in order to compose, by his authority, a dissension among the counts of Mansfeldt, he was seized with a violent inflammation in his stomach, which in a few days put an end to his life, in the sixty-third year of his age."

Such was the situation of affairs, when the diet of Ratisbon assembled on the 5th of June, 1546. In pursuance of the recess of the late diet of Worms, a conference had taken place at the beginning of the year between certain divines of each party. Its proceedings however were soon terminated, and there is no need to enter at all minutely into them. We have already had more than enough of these vain attempts to make fire and water coalesce.—"The emperor," Dr. Robertson observes, "instead of appointing men of moderation and pacific temper to appear in defence of the catholic doctrines, made choice of fierce bigots, attached to their own system with a blind obstinacy that rendered all hope of a reconciliation desperate."—On the part of the protestants, the divines first nominated were Melancthon, Bucer, Schnepfius, and Brentius; but Melancthon was excused, and George Major substituted for him at the instance of Luther, who urged that "there was not a man there worthy to dispute with Melancthon: that Melancthon also was not in good health, and ought not to be needlessly exposed: and that the younger men ought to

be brought forward, that they might be prepared to take the place of those who were going off the stage." Major devolved the leading part on Bucer as the senior, and he appears to have acquitted himself in a very satisfactory manner. But Malvenda, "a Spanish divine, who took upon him the conduct of the debate on the part of the catholics; managed it with all the subtle dexterity of a scholastic metaphysician, more studious to perplex his adversaries than to convince them, and more intent on palliating error than on discovering truth. The protestants, filled with indignation, as well at his sophistry as at some regulations which the emperor endeavoured to impose on the disputants, broke off the conference abruptly, being now fully convinced that, in all his late measures, the emperor could have no other view than to amuse them, and to gain time for ripening his own schemes."¹ Cochlæus, (who had been one of the presidents,) in a book which he published, pronounced the princes, divines, and all concerned on the protestant side, to be "apostates, rebels, and heretics, and that they ought to be proceeded against accordingly:" and Pallavicini says, "Torches were wanting here, not to illuminate the protestants but to burn them, for they erred not from darkness of understanding, but from depravity of heart." Father Paul's remark however is, that "the conference was dissolved by the arts of the catholics, and the deceitful pretences of the emperor."

The diet of Ratisbon was attended by few of the protestant members. From distrust of the emperor they chose rather to send deputies. The emperor by an artful opening address dexterously avoided discovering his own sentiments, appeared to refer every thing to the judgment of the diet, and reserved to himself, as his only part, that of carrying into execution what they should recommend. Yet he was no less secure by this means of such a decision

¹ Robertson.

as he wished to obtain. "The Roman-catholic members, prompted by their own zeal, or prepared by his intrigues, joined immediately in representing that the authority of the council now met at Trent ought to be supreme in all matters of controversy; that all Christians should submit to its decrees as the infallible rule of their faith; and therefore they besought him to exert the power, with which he was invested by the Almighty, in protecting that assembly, and in compelling the protestants to acquiesce in its determinations. The protestants, on the other hand, presented a memorial, in which, after repeating their objections to the council of Trent, they proposed, as the only effectual method of deciding the points in dispute, that either a free general council should be assembled in Germany, or that a select number of divines should be appointed out of each party to examine and define articles of faith. They mentioned the recesses of several diets favourable to this proposition, and which had afforded them the prospect of terminating all their differences in this amicable manner; they now conjured the emperor not to depart from his former plan, and, by offering violence to their consciences, to bring calamities upon Germany, the very thought of which must fill every lover of his country with horror. The emperor, receiving this paper with a contemptuous smile, paid no further regard to it. Having already taken his final resolution, and perceiving that nothing but force could compel them to acquiesce in it, he despatched the cardinal of Trent to Rome, in order to conclude an alliance with the pope, the terms of which were already agreed on; he commanded a body of troops, levied on purpose in the Low-Countries, to advance towards Germany; he gave commissions to several officers for raising men in different parts of the empire; he warned John and Albert of Brandenburg, that now was the proper time of exerting themselves, in order to rescue their ally, Henry of Brunswick, from captivity.

—Alarmed by such proceedings “the deputies of the confederates demanded audience of the emperor, and, in the name of their masters, required to know whether these military preparations were carried on by his command, and for what end, and against what enemy? To a question put in such a tone, and at a time when facts were become too notorious to be denied, it was necessary to give an explicit answer. Charles owned the orders he had issued, and, professing his purpose not to molest on account of religion those who should act as dutiful subjects, declared that he had nothing in view but to maintain the rights and prerogatives of the imperial dignity, and, by punishing some factious members, to preserve the ancient constitution of the empire from being impaired or dissolved by their irregular and licentious conduct. Though the emperor did not name the persons whom he charged with such high crimes, and destined to be the objects of his vengeance, it was obvious that he had the elector of Saxony and the landgrave of Hesse in view. Their deputies considering what he had said, as a plain declaration of his hostile intentions, immediately retired from Ratisbon.” The diet soon after broke up, (on the 24th of July,) and both parties openly prepared for war.

On the emperor's conduct in all this business we must pronounce, that the meanness, deceit, and tyranny, by which it was characterized, are in the highest degree offensive to every sentiment of honour and justice. Yet all is vindicated, and even applauded, both by Pallavicini and Maimbourg, because it was to serve the church!—Nothing could have been more agreeable to our feelings, than to have seen Charles, after all his artifice and contrivance, taken unprepared, and defeated at the head of the troops which he had got together, and the forces of his prompter, the pope, cut off before they could reach the scene of action; all which had well nigh taken place, and,

humanly speaking, might easily have been effected. Thus the liberty of Germany might have been established and the protestant religion placed in security. This would have exactly met *our* wishes ; but to that higher Wisdom which controls all occurrences, and watches with an eye of special regard over the affairs of the church, it seemed good to permit a widely different course of events. It pleased Him, indeed, ultimately to establish the cause of the German protestants in safety : but, according to the anticipations which we have repeatedly seen the leading reformers entertaining, their church was to be previously humbled and purified. It was His good pleasure also to bring down the pride, and to disappoint the ambition of Charles V, as effectually, and in as mortifying a manner, as if it had been accomplished by the elector and the landgrave ; but it was to be by the hand of a man of far less principle than either of them, whom the emperor himself was, with the most unsuspecting confidence, nourishing up to execute both these great designs of providence.—Here then we are strikingly taught to commit our ways to God, to leave all with him, and in faith and patience to wait the unfolding of *his* dispensations, who will infallibly bring about the events most to be desired, in the time and by the means which are the best to be chosen.

Such were, in fact, the sentiments with which the pious elector of Saxony received the news of the emperor's virtual denunciation of him as a rebel, whom he would forthwith proceed to punish as he deserved. In directing his deputies quietly to withdraw from Ratisbon, he said, " He had merited no such treatment from the emperor's hands ; that, whatever might be pretended, his religion was the real cause of it ; and that he committed the event to God, who would undoubtedly direct the whole to the glory of his own name. By his grace," he added, " I have resolved to persevere even to the end in the confes-

sion of his word and truth, though it should be at the risk of my person, my life, and all that I possess."—He rejoiced to hear that the confederates were not dispirited! he relied on the divine aid; and, in conjunction with the landgrave, resolved to do every thing in his power for the common cause.

Two honourable instances of States which joined the protestant cause, even in its present perilous circumstances, demand to be here recorded. One of these was the Palatinate of the Rhine. We have before related the reformation of the Upper Palatinate, or that of Bavaria. In the year 1545, the Lower Palatinate, or Palatinate of the Rhine which is of much superior importance—its prince enjoying the electoral dignity, followed the example. Frederic the present elector had married the emperor's niece, the daughter of Christiern king of Denmark. He was a great favourite with the emperor, and had been repeatedly employed by him in his transactions with the protestants: the consequence of which was, very contrary to what had been intended, that he became strongly impressed in favour of their principles. He succeeded his brother Lewis in the year 1544. Like many others, he had indulged the hope that a general reformation, or at least a legal establishment of the reformed religion, would be the result of so many conferences and so much discussion; and he was willing to wait for this happy event. Finding all these however issue in nothing, he thought himself called, at length, to countenance by his authority the system which he approved, and to gratify the wishes of his subjects, who, by their intercourse with the protestant states, had universally imbibed their opinions. In all this he was materially prompted and aided by his relation and destined successor, Otho Henry, of whom mention has been made in speaking of the other Palatinate.

The case of Leutkirk, a free imperial city of Sua-

bia, is still more honourable, because its avowal of the principles of the reformation was made when the danger had still further increased, and notwithstanding formidable opposition, both from persons possessing civil authority in the city, and from powerful ecclesiastical establishments in the neighbourhood. The thirst after evangelical truth appears to have been first excited here by the publication of the Confession of Augsburg, in the year 1531: but it was strenuously resisted by Faber, a native of the place—the same who was afterwards raised to the see of Vienna for his opposition to Luther. By his influence a faction was kept up in the city, which effectually withstood the public reception of the reformation till the year 1546, when the opposition was overborne; not, it must be confessed, without some disorders taking place. Protestantism was then introduced, and, notwithstanding many conflicts and some reverses, it has been maintained there to this day.

CHAPTER XXV.

Closing transactions of Luther's life—His death—His character—His later writings.

WE now proceed more particularly to describe the closing scenes of Luther's life.

He completed his sixty-second year in the month of November, 1545; and he did not survive that period so much as three months. For some years previously he seems scarcely to have written a letter in which he did not anticipate his approaching dissolution; and often his expressions of desire for his dismissal, and for the heavenly rest, are very ardent. Indeed he had, in his many and increasing infirmities, sufficient warning that the time of his departure was at hand. He was troubled with excruciating pains in the head, which nearly deprived him of the sight of one eye; his legs swelled, and he suffered severely from the stone. His enemies however were not able to wait with patience for an event which could not now be far distant; and a pretended account of his death, as having been accompanied with "a miracle, wrought by God for the honour of Christ, the terror of the wicked, and the comfort of good men," was, in the year 1545, printed and circulated in Italy. The story is so absurd that it hardly deserves to be repeated, except to shew what some men were wicked enough to invent, and others weak enough to receive at that time. It set forth that Luther, finding death

approaching, had called for the sacrament, and immediately after receiving it had expired: that before his death he had desired that his corpse might be placed upon the altar, and there receive divine honours—which desire however had not been complied with: that when his body was interred a tremendous storm arose, which threatened destruction to every thing around, and that the affrighted spectators, looking up, saw the host, which the impious man had presumed to receive, hovering in the air: that this having been taken, with great reverence, and deposited in a sacred place, the tempest ceased; but at night returned again with still greater fury: that in the morning, the grave being opened, no vestige of the body could be found, but a horrible stench of brimstone proceeded from the place, by which the health of the bystanders was seriously affected: and that the consequence of all this had been, the return of many persons into the bosom of the catholic church. The paper, containing this account, was brought to Luther, and he caused it to be reprinted with this addition: “I, doctor Martin Luther, testify under my hand, that I have received this extravagant fiction, this 21st day of March, and read it with great pleasure—except for the abominable lies against the Divine Majesty which it contains. It gratifies me exceedingly to find myself so obnoxious to Satan, and to his agents, the pope and papists. May God convert and recover them from the power of the devil! or, if my prayers for them must be in vain, owing to their having committed ‘the sin unto death,’ then may God grant that they may soon fill up their measure, and that they may find their joy and comfort only in writing such tales as this! Let us leave them alone: they go whither they have chosen to go. I shall see whether they can be saved; and how they will repent them of the lies and blasphemies with which they fill the world.”

It would certainly have been highly gratifying to

record, that in the closing period of Luther's life the ruggedness of his temper had been softened down, and that his latter days were passed only in peace and love. Fidelity however requires us to acknowledge, that painful traces of asperity still occasionally appear, and those inflamed, and at the same time partially, though only partially, excused by the irritability produced by age and growing infirmities. The sacramental controversy still vexed him, and he was not a little displeased at Melancthon, for being less severe than himself in his judgment of the Zwinglians. The elector however successfully interfered to compose this difference. But several other things in the state of Wittemberg much disturbed his mind; particularly the corruption of manners, and the number of clandestine marriages contracted by the students, which, being confirmed by the legal authorities, (who still acted upon the pontifical regulations concerning such subjects,) threatened to be very injurious to the university itself. Luther, in consequence, rather suddenly left Wittemberg, and went to Leipzig; visited George of Anhalt at Mersburg, Amsdorf at Naumburg, and other friends; and was not at all inclined to return home—urging that this was “the last year of his life, and he wished to spend it at a distance from scenes which disquieted him.” Much allowance is certainly due to an aged man, who had passed such a life of labour and conflict as Luther had done, and who now, in the midst of many personal afflictions, sought repose. His indisposition to return was however overcome. The elector wrote to him with exquisite tenderness and prudence; the university likewise addressed him; and he yielded to their united entreaties. Indeed it seems clear from this, and from what are known to have been the closing occupations of his life, that his dejection and discontent were but transient—the passing shade rather than the settled colour of his mind; the usual tone and temper of which he ere long recovered.

All the circumstances of Luther's visit to Eisleben, and the last transactions of his life, appear to have been highly honourable to him. The country of Mansfeldt is a mining district, and its copper and silver mines had of late years been more productive than formerly ; which rather sharpened than satisfied the cupidity of its sovereigns and their courtiers. They wished to appropriate a larger share of the proceeds to themselves than before, and this occasioned discord between them and the people. The counts moreover, who were partly Roman-catholic and partly protestant, had differences between themselves : and both these sources of variance threatened serious consequences. Luther, who thought his countrymen oppressed, had been invited over by one of the counts the year before, to use his influence and afford his advice for the settlement of the disputes ; and he had obeyed the call, though without succeeding in his object. Now however the invitation was renewed by common consent, and consequently with better prospects of success. Luther therefore determined, with the elector's permission, again to undertake the service, though the state of his health, and the winter season might well have excused him. Six days before he set out, he thus spoke of himself in a letter to the pastor of Bremen : " I am old, decrepit, sluggish, weary, spiritless, and blind of an eye : yet, at a time ere which I very reasonably hoped to have been removed to my rest by death, as if I had never managed, or written, or spoken, or done any thing before, I am quite overwhelmed with writing, and speaking, and doing, and managing all sorts of things."

He left Wittemberg on the 23d of January, accompanied by his three sons. The weather was inclement, and he was detained three days at Halle, by the rising of the river, which he was obliged to cross in a boat, not without some danger. During his stay at Halle he preached for Justus Jonas, who had been

superintendent there since the reformation of the place in 1539, and who attended him the remainder of his journey. On his arrival on their borders, the counts of Mansfeldt received him with an escort of more than a hundred horse—treating him as the elector of Saxony's ambassador. He was extremely weak, and seemed near death when he reached the residence of count Albert on the 28th of January; but medicine, friction, warmth, and other means of resuscitation revived him. He lost no time in entering upon the business which had brought him thither, and laboured indefatigably in the despatch of it for three weeks together; being assisted by Wolfgang prince of Anhalt, count Swartzburg, and others: but his success was not such as he could have wished; though other points, relating to the ecclesiastical affairs of the country, were brought to some satisfactory conclusion.

In the mean while his health was declining. Some time before, he had had a seton or issue opened in his leg, which had been the means of so much relieving his head, that he had been able to walk to church and to the lecture room, and to mount the pulpit; whereas previously he was obliged to be conveyed in a carriage; and often could only address his family at home. But, on leaving Wittemberg for Eisleben, he had failed to take with him the applications used for keeping up the discharge, and, amid the pressure of his present engagements, this relief was neglected; which proved of bad consequence.

Thus matters proceeded till the 17th of February, Luther at all proper times applying himself to business, eating and sleeping well, and being very cheerful in his conversation. On that day, his friends, perceiving more repose to be desirable for him, persuaded him to keep quiet in his study; which he did, frequently walking up and down, in an undress, but conversing with animation. "From time to time," says Justus Jonas, "he would stop, and looking out

at the window, in that attitude (as his custom was,) address fervent prayers to God ; so that I and Cœlius, who were in the room with him, could not but perceive it: and then he would say, ‘I was born and baptized here at Eisleben ; what if I should remain or even die here?’”

Though however Luther passed the day in his study, he did not choose to sup there, but in the large dining room ; observing, that “to be solitary did not help the spirits.” During supper, he quoted and made observations on many interesting passages of scripture. The conversation also happening to turn on the question, whether the righteous in a future state of blessedness would recognise those who had been their friends on earth, he gave his opinion decidedly in the affirmative. In the course of more ordinary conversation, he remarked, “If I can but establish peace among the counts, the rulers of my country, I will then go home, lay myself down in my coffin, and give my body for food to the worms.”

Before supper he had complained of a pain in the chest, to which he was subject. It was however relieved by warm applications. After supper it returned ; but he would not have medical aid called in, but about nine o’clock lay down on a couch and fell asleep. He awoke as the clock struck ten, and desired that those about him would retire to rest. When led into his chamber he said, “I go to rest with God ;” and repeated the words of the Psalm, “Into thy hands I commend my spirit :” and, stretching out his hand to bid all good night, he added, “Pray for the cause of God !” He then went to bed : but about one o’clock he awoke Jonas and another who slept in the room with him, desired that a fire might be made in his study, and exclaimed, “Oh God ! how ill I am ! I suffer dreadful oppression in my chest : I shall certainly die at Eisleben !”—He then removed into his study without requiring assist-

ance, and again repeating, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit!" He walked backwards and forwards, and desired to have warm cloths brought him. In the mean time his physicians were sent for, as also count Albert; who presently came with his countess. All Luther's friends and his sons were now collected about him: medicines were given him, and he seemed somewhat relieved; and having lain down on a couch he fell into a perspiration. This gave encouragement to some present: but he said, "It is a cold sweat, the forerunner of death: I shall yield up my spirit." He then began to pray, nearly in these words: "O eternal and merciful God, my heavenly Father, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and God of all consolation! I thank thee that thou hast revealed to me thy Son Jesus Christ; in whom I have believed, whom I have preached, whom I have confessed, whom I love and worship as my dear Saviour and Redeemer, whom the pope and the multitude of the ungodly do persecute, revile, and blaspheme. I beseech thee, my Lord Jesus Christ, receive my soul! O heavenly Father, though I be snatched out of this life, though I must now lay down this body, yet know I assuredly that I shall dwell with thee for ever, and that none can pluck me out of thy hands!" He then thrice again repeated the words, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth!" Also those words, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life:" and that verse of the lxxviiith Psalm, "Our God is the God of whom cometh salvation: God is the Lord by whom we escape death." He then became silent, and his powers began to fail him: but, when several present addressed him, "Reverend father, you die in the constant confession of Christ and his doctrine, which you have preached?" he distinctly answered, "Yes," and spoke no more; but, about a quarter

of an hour afterwards, between two and three o'clock in the morning of February 18, "with his hands clasped together, and without a finger or a feature being disturbed, gently breathed his last."

Such is the account which Justus Jonas wrote to the elector of Saxony, by the hand of count Albert's secretary, within an hour after Luther's death; except that in a few passages some things are supplied from the fuller narrative which was drawn up for insertion in Luther's German works, and authenticated by the signatures of Justus Jonas, superintendent of Halle, and formerly rector of the university of Wittemberg, Michael Coelius, pastor of Eisleben, and John Auri-faber, chaplain to the elector of Saxony; all of whom were present with Luther to the last.

Thus died in peace the man, who, bearing no higher office than that of an Augustinian monk, and afterwards of a protestant professor of divinity, had shaken to its centre one of the most firmly-seated systems of despotism and delusion that the world ever beheld; who had provoked, and for nearly thirty years together defied, the utmost malice of those mighty powers, which had a little time before made the proudest monarchs to tremble on their thrones; while, for the suppression of his principles, diet after diet of the German empire, aided by the representatives of the papal authority, met in vain. His hand had been against every man that was engaged on the side of reigning error, and every such man's hand against him; yet not one of them could touch a hair of his head to his hurt: he lived and died unharmed, not only "in the presence of all his brethren," but in despite of all his enemies. So marvellous is the providence of God; so inexhaustible is his store of means for accomplishing "all his pleasure;" and so secure, under all circumstances, is the man over whom the shield of his protection is extended.

Count Albert would gladly have retained the body

of Luther, and interred it in the country which gave it birth : but he submitted to the wishes of the elector, who directed it to be conveyed to Wittenberg. Jonas's letter having been despatched at four o'clock in the morning, the elector's pleasure was signified on the evening of the same day, by the return of the courier from Weimar. The next day therefore the corpse was solemnly conveyed, with the singing of hymns, and attended by all the counts of Mansfeldt and a numerous procession of persons of high rank, to the church of S. Andrew at Eisleben, to be deposited there till preparations were made for its removal. On this occasion Justus Jonas delivered an address to the assembled multitude, from the latter part of 1 Thessalonians iv. On the twenty-first, Coelius preached from the opening of Isaiah lvii, "The righteous perisheth, &c;" and after the sermon the body was removed, amid an immense concourse of people, and conveyed with a splendid procession as far as Halle. Hither people flocked from all parts of the country to meet it, and it was received at the gates by the senators, ministers, and all the principal persons of the place. It was deposited for the night in the church of S. Mary, where, says the writer of the narrative, the cxxxth Psalm was "expressed, not so much by singing, as by the tears and sobs of the whole people." Early the next day the procession set forward towards Wittenberg, and was met on the road by a deputation sent by the elector to receive it. It rested that night at Kemberg, and on February 23d reached Wittenberg. When it approached the gate of the city, the rector, the professors, and the students of the university, with all the principal citizens, met and joined the procession; after which it advanced, attended by the whole population, to All-Saints church. The widow of Luther, with her daughter and some other female attendants, her three sons, and Melancthon, Jonas, Bugenhagen, Cruciger, and other intimate friends

of the deceased, took their place immediately after the corpse. So great an assemblage of persons, it is said, was never before seen at Wittemberg. Suitable hymns were sung as the funeral proceeded through the streets of the city. On arriving at the church, the coffin was placed on the right hand of the pulpit; whence, after some further verses had been sung, Bugenhagen delivered an appropriate discourse to some thousands of persons. Melancthon then pronounced a funeral oration, both expressive of his own affection, and calculated to soothe the sorrows of the bereaved church: after which the body was committed to the tomb, hard by the spot from which the reformer had preached so many animated and devout sermons before the electors and dukes of Saxony, and the whole church.

Such is the account given of the funeral, by the same persons to whom we are indebted for the narrative of Luther's closing scene. The pomp of his funeral is much carped at by Cochläus, Maimbourg, and other popish writers. The former is reminded by his *tin* coffin of the *iron* one of Mahomet; and in *that* finds an image of the hardened heart and front of Luther! The latter asserts, without any foundation in fact, that the elector raised to his memory a monument of white marble, surrounded with the statues of the twelve apostles—intending to intimate that Luther was “a thirteenth, to be added to their number.” But it is as unnecessary as it would be nauseating to retail, for the purpose of exposing them, all the cavils of such writers, in which it is hard to say whether folly or malignity preponderates.

Cochläus censures the secular, or, as he is pleased to call it, the “profane” employment in which Luther closed his days: but we may much more justly adopt the sentiments of Seckendorf: “He was well prepared for death, and, as his writings and conversation shewed, had been long desiring and praying for it: and he ended his days in the pious and honoura-

ble discharge of business of high importance" to the peace and the liberties of his native country. "In the midst of this business he found leisure for daily and fervent prayer. In the short and busy time which he spent at Eisleben," notwithstanding all his infirmities, "he preached three or four times, and twice received the sacrament, after confession and absolution. He died after cheerful and pious conversation with his friends; his sons and several illustrious persons of both sexes standing round him, and waiting upon him; and, after a conflict of only a few hours, which he sustained in a becoming manner, came off 'more than conqueror.' His age, though not very advanced, was what comparatively few attain. His own observation upon this subject, made at the supper-table the very night of his death, was remarkable: 'If a child of a year old dies, very likely, taking all the world over, a thousand or two thousand of the same age depart with him: but, when I an old man of sixty-three die, scarcely sixty or a hundred, as far advanced in years, will accompany me.'"

The news of Luther's death excited the deepest grief in all quarters among the friends of the reformation; which was strikingly expressed in the correspondence of many eminent persons with the elector of Saxony. Amsdorf declared himself not only distressed, but quite alarmed at his venerated friend's removal at such a period. "He feared," he said, "that it was the forerunner of judgments, which it had pleased God to spare this his distinguished servant the pain of beholding;" and many others wrote in the same strain. The heads of the university of Wittemberg, in reply to a letter which the elector had addressed to them, announcing the sad event, and exhorting them not to be discouraged, but to persevere in their studies and pursuits, spoke of themselves as both "distressed and terrified." "We

are now," say they, "orphans, bereaved and solitary. The divine will however must be obeyed; and we must rest on the consolatory promises of the Son of God, 'I will not leave you orphans'—'Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' We implore him to be the pilot of his own vessel, and to protect and guide your highness. We acknowledge ourselves bound 'to keep that which is committed unto us.' A precious deposit indeed our departed father has left us, in the knowledge of the pure doctrine of Christ: we desire to transmit it untarnished to posterity; and implore the grace of God to enable us to do so."

Luther left three sons and one daughter. The elector of Saxony and the counts of Mansfeldt provided for his widow and family. His children appear all to have done credit to their father's memory, and his son Paul, in particular, became eminently distinguished in the medical profession. He was also a faithful supporter of his father's principles. From him the family was propagated; and it continued respectable, both for character and situation, through several generations.¹

The character of Luther has been delineated by so many hands, its features are so marked and prominent, and he is himself now so fully before the readers of this history, in all his modes of thinking, feeling, and acting, from first to last, that I should esteem it superfluous to attempt anew any elaborate description of his various endowments, whether of the understanding or of the heart. It may be of more real service to bring under review the parting estimate formed of him by one of our most popular, and at the same time most judicious writers. The historian

¹ Seck. iii, 647, 651, 652. The last lineal descendant whom I have seen mentioned, Martin Gottlob Luther, died at Dresden, 1759.—*Life of Luther* by Tischer.

of Charles V. will likewise be less suspected of partiality for the great reformer, than either Dr. Milner or myself: yet he will be found to confirm, in many important particulars, the sentiments expressed concerning him throughout the present work. What may appear to me erroneous in Dr. Robertson's summary, I shall endeavour to correct, and to supply any thing material which I think to be wanting.

“As Luther was raised up by providence,” Dr. Robertson says, “to be the author of one of the greatest and most interesting revolutions recorded in history, there is not any person perhaps whose character has been drawn with such opposite colours. In his own age, one party, struck with horror and inflamed with rage, when they saw with what a daring hand he overturned every thing which they held to be sacred, or valued as beneficial, imputed to him not only all the defects and vices of a man, but the qualities of a demon. The other, warmed with the admiration and gratitude, which they thought he merited as the restorer of light and liberty to the Christian church, ascribed to him perfections above the condition of humanity, and viewed all his actions with a veneration bordering on that, which should be paid only to those who are guided by the immediate inspiration of heaven. It is his own conduct, not the undistinguishing censure, or the exaggerated praise of his contemporaries, that ought to regulate the opinions of the present age concerning him. Zeal for what he regarded as truth, undaunted intrepidity to maintain his own system, abilities, both natural and acquired, to defend his principles, and unwearied industry in propagating them, are virtues which shine so conspicuously in every part of his behaviour, that even his enemies must allow him to have possessed them in an eminent degree. To these may be added, with equal justice, such purity and even austerity of manners, as became one who assumed the character of a re-

former; such sanctity of life as suited the doctrine which he delivered; and such perfect disinterestedness as affords no slight presumption of his sincerity. Superior to all selfish considerations, a stranger to the elegancies of life, and despising its pleasures, he left the honours and emoluments of the church to his disciples, remaining satisfied himself in his original state of professor in the university, and pastor of the town of Wittemberg, with the moderate appointments annexed to these offices. His extraordinary qualities were alloyed with no inconsiderable mixture of human frailty and human passions. These, however, were of such a nature, that they cannot be imputed to malevolence or corruption of heart, but seem to have taken their rise from the same source with many of his virtues. His mind, forcible and vehement in all its operations, roused by great objects, or agitated by violent passions, broke out, on many occasions, with an impetuosity which astonishes men of feebler spirits, or such as are placed in a more tranquil situation. By carrying some praiseworthy dispositions to excess, he bordered sometimes on what was culpable, and was often betrayed into actions which exposed him to censure. His confidence that his own opinions were well founded approached to arrogance; his courage in asserting them, to rashness; his firmness in adhering to them, to obstinacy; and his zeal in confuting his adversaries, to rage and scurrility. Accustomed himself to consider every thing as subordinate to truth, he expected the same deference for it from other men; and, without making any allowances for their timidity or prejudices, he poured forth, against such as disappointed him in this particular, a torrent of invective mingled with contempt. Regardless of any distinction of rank or character when his doctrines were attacked, he chastised all his adversaries indiscriminately, with the same rough hand: neither the royal dignity of Henry VIII, nor the eminent learning and abilities of Eras-

mus, screened them from the same gross abuse with which he treated Tetzels or Eckius.

“ But these indecencies, of which Luther was guilty, must not be imputed wholly to the violence of his temper. They ought to be charged in part on the manners of the age. Among a rude people, unacquainted with those maxims, which, by putting continual restraint on the passions of individuals, have polished society, and rendered it agreeable, disputes were managed with heat, and strong emotions were uttered in their natural language, without reserve or delicacy. At the same time, the works of learned men were all composed in Latin, and they were not only authorized, by the example of eminent writers in that language to use their antagonists with the most illiberal scurrility; but, in the dead tongue, indecencies of every kind appeared less shocking than in a living language, whose idioms and phrases seem gross, because they are familiar.

“ In passing judgment upon the characters of men, we ought to try them upon the principles and maxims of their own age, not by those of another. For, although virtue and vice are at all times the same, manners and customs vary continually. Some parts of Luther's behaviour, which to us appear most culpable, gave no disgust to his contemporaries. It was even by some of those qualities, which we are now apt to blame, that he was fitted for accomplishing the great work which he undertook. To rouse mankind, when sunk in ignorance or superstition, and to encounter the rage of bigotry armed with power, required the utmost vehemence of zeal, as well as a temper daring to excess. A gentle call would neither have reached, nor have excited those to whom it must have been addressed. A spirit more amiable, but less vigorous than Luther's, would have shrunk back from the dangers which he braved and surmounted. Towards the close of Luther's life, though without any perceptible diminution of his

zeal or abilities, the infirmities of his temper increased upon him, so that he grew daily more peevish, more irascible, and more impatient of contradiction. Having lived to be a witness of his own amazing success; to see a great part of Europe embrace his doctrines; and to shake the foundation of the papal throne, before which the mightiest monarchs had trembled; he discovered, on some occasions, symptoms of vanity and self-applause. He must have been, indeed, more than man, if, upon contemplating all that he actually accomplished, he had never felt any sentiment of this kind arising in his breast.

“Some time before his death, he felt his strength declining, his constitution being worn out by a prodigious multiplicity of business, added to the labour of discharging his ministerial function with unremitting diligence, to the fatigue of constant study, besides the composition of works as voluminous as if he had enjoyed uninterrupted leisure and retirement. His natural intrepidity did not forsake him at the approach of death: his last conversation with his friends was concerning the happiness reserved for good men in a future life; of which he spoke with the fervour and delight natural to one who expected and wished to enter soon upon the enjoyment of it. The account of his death filled the Roman-catholic party with excessive, as well as indecent joy, and damped the spirit of all his followers; neither party sufficiently considering that his doctrines were now so firmly rooted, as to be in a condition to flourish independent of the hand which first had planted them.”

The enumeration here made, both of the excellences and of the defects of the reformer's character, must be acknowledged to be, in the main, and as far as it goes, just. On what ground, indeed, “austerity of manners” is ascribed to him, I am not aware. His disposition was eminently social: he enjoyed

conversation, and seems to have been very much the life of the company in which he allowed himself to mingle. Even Maimbourg admits that, "when he did not give way to anger, he was of a very cheerful temper, and joked freely:" and Dr. Milner thinks that he even carried hilarity to excess.—"Purity and sanctity of life," and "perfect disinterestedness," are, I am persuaded, attributed to him with entire propriety, notwithstanding the attempts made, by the perversion of some detached passages in his writings, to charge the contrary upon him.—That "malevolence," or any real ill-will, even towards the objects of his severest censure, is not to be imputed to him, will be apparent to every candid student of his history and his writings. He spoke out all the sentiments of his heart, concerning both the principles and the conduct of those whom he opposed, often with very culpable asperity of language: but present the most virulent of his enemies to his mind in circumstances which called for compassion, and his bowels yearned over them. Witness his letter to the wretched Tetzels, when he heard of the despair in which he was ending his days. I am convinced that, with all his impetuosity and exterior harshness, he was a man of a warm and even tender heart. And in this connexion we ought by no means to overlook that freedom from a persecuting spirit and persecuting principles, which has been shewn to have formed his honourable distinction above almost all his brother reformers.¹

While however we would cordially agree with Dr. Robertson in not imputing even "the mixture of human frailty and human feelings," in Luther's character, to "malevolence," or, in the common sense of the word, to "corruption of heart;" we cannot, with him, trace these evils to "the same source with many of his virtues." If by this any thing more be

¹ Vol. i. p. 259, 394, &c.

meant, than that his faults often sprang from his good qualities being unduly exercised, or carried to a culpable excess; if it really mean, that a fountain may "send forth at the same place both sweet water and bitter;" it must be acknowledged to be highly objectionable: but, as bearing only that qualified sense which we have supposed, it may be sufficient to say of the passage, that, while the sentiment may not be incorrect, the mode of expressing it is very exceptionable.

That Luther treated Erasmus with "the same gross abuse as Tetzels or Eckius," is a highly overcharged statement. He shewed much forbearance towards that learned man; bestowed great pains to conciliate, or at least to avoid alienating him; and always, I think, considerably tempered his language towards him¹—For the coarseness and severity of his language towards Henry VIII, he himself afterwards apologized: and there is much justness in the considerations which Dr. R. proposes in extenuation of these faults of too many of his writings. Yet after all, as Dr. Milner has observed, neither the language itself nor the temper of mind which dictated it (a violent, though not a malignant temper,) is to be excused. They formed the greatest blemish of Luther's character.—The simple fact, of his "expecting from men a deference for truth," which should lead them "to consider every thing as subordinate to it," we can never regard as implying an erroneous estimate of things; though we would offer no apology for any "invective" or "contempt," into which the disappointment of such expectation might betray him.

The *largeness* of mind, which rendered Luther, in general, quite indifferent about trifling objects, while he would concede nothing to any man in points which he esteemed to be of real importance, has

¹ Vol. i. p. 276, 278, 282, 294.

been repeatedly, or even throughout his whole history, presented to our notice. Nor could this be separated from a real *moderation* of spirit in many particulars, however little that quality may have been generally allowed to him. Undeniable instances of it occur in what he was ready to yield with respect to the power and jurisdiction of the bishops, what he urged in favour of the preservation of the canonries in cathedral churches, and his advice in the case of Osiander; not to mention that which he gave concerning the discontinuance of the protestant preaching at Augsburg, during the period of the diet, if the emperor should require it.¹

“His confidence that his own opinions were well founded” might sometimes (and that in other instances beside the sacramental controversy,) “approach to arrogance;” and “symptoms of vanity and self-applause” might “on some occasions be discovered:” he must indeed, as Dr. R. observes, have been “more than man, if, upon contemplating all that he ” had been made the means of actually accomplishing, “he had never felt any sentiment of this kind rising in his breast:” yet there was not wanting in him that real modesty in estimating his own endowments and performances, which is essential alike to a truly great and a truly good man. Of this too we have seen proofs, and additional ones are yet in reserve.²

With all his heat and violence, likewise, he was seldom chargeable with rashness or imprudence in his conduct. He might speak hastily, but he generally acted wisely.³ Indeed, as Melancthon has observed of him in his funeral oration, he possessed an intuitive sagacity which seemed at once to suggest

¹ Above, p. 7, 134, 144.

² See above, his conversation with Bucer on preaching, p. 91; his letter to Venice, pp. 141, 142; his observations on his own writings, on several occasions; and below his letter to Brentius.

³ Dean Milner.

to him both what was true, and what, in difficult circumstances, was right to be done.

But the sentence in Dr. Robertson's account of him, which would be much more painful than any other, were there reason to believe it correct, is the following: "Towards the close of Luther's life, though without any perceptible diminution of his zeal or abilities, the infirmities of his temper increased upon him, so that he grew daily more peevish, more irascible, and more impatient of contradiction." This is the very imputation which his worst enemies labour to fix upon him. "Never," says Maimbourg, "was this heresiarch more violent or more extravagant in his hostility to the church and the pope, than immediately before his death:" and for this he assigns, as a reason, his dread of the council of Trent, and other causes equally imaginary. But Seckendorf, on the contrary, affirms that his writings against the papacy were no more severe than they had been almost ever since the diet of Worms; that he was never more inclined to peace; for the sake of which he was willing to leave the pope and the bishops in possession of all their wealth and dignity; and to tolerate all ceremonies which could be considered as indifferent,—provided only pure doctrine were allowed, and persecution abandoned.—Bossuet would extend the same injurious representation to his conduct to the sacramentarians, and even to his own immediate friends: and towards the former we must acknowledge that he at all times acted with very unwarrantable harshness. But, with respect to the charge of increasing irascibility of temper as the close of life approached, we may first remark, that certainly no traces of it are to be discovered amid all the employments which filled up several of his last weeks. In his undertaking the business which carried him to Eisleben, in his journey thither in the depth of winter, in his preaching by the way, in the manner in which he passed his time there, in his

sermons, his labours, his intercourse with his friends, and his devotions, we find nothing but what was peaceable, benevolent, and pious. Nor do I recollect anything particular of a contrary kind subsequent to his return to Wittemberg, in the summer of 1545. But it is in his previous sudden departure from that place, with the causes and the state of feeling which led to it, that we may probably trace what has given occasion to the painful representation, too hastily, as I trust, adopted by Dr. Robertson. As we have before stated, however, there is reason to believe that to have been a passing cloud, shedding a gloomy influence over the reformer's mind, (such as the firmest and best regulated spirit may not always escape,) rather than anything permanent: and surely, under all the circumstances of the case, we may admit that it calls more for our condolence than for severe censure. Luther was worn down with care and labour, with disease and pain. External events also were at that juncture peculiarly harassing: and all this acting upon a temper naturally irritable, and, it is admitted, not so much softened and subdued as it ought to have been, for a time overcame him. He was peevish and impatient to those about him, and he could no longer bear the scene of his vexations. The course however which he took was the proper one: he retired, he relaxed himself, he visited his pious friends, Amsdorf, George of Anhalt, and others, and no doubt he communed with his God. The elector wrote affectionately to him: the university solicited his return. He complied, and we hear no more of his fretfulness and desertion of his duties.—I trust this is the true account of the case; which, while, from the censures entailed upon Luther, it may admonish us, how much it behoves even the greatest and best of men never to relax their watchfulness, but to pray to the last, “Hold thou me up and I shall be safe;” may teach us also candour and forbearance in our judgments, and may especially guard us

against confounding what is transient in the feelings of any one, with what is habitual and a part of his character.

And here, after reviewing these several qualities of Luther's temper and mind, we may justly take occasion to notice the admirable arrangement of divine providence, in giving him and Melancthon to be so intimately associated together. "Helps meet" for one another they assuredly were, in a very remarkable degree. Maimbourg indeed cannot but stand astonished at their close and lasting union. "Was there ever," he is ready to ask, "so extraordinary and almost unnatural a friendship between men, from the contrariety of whose tempers we might rather have expected an irreconcilable antipathy? Luther was daring, imperious, fierce, irritable, prompt to decide, and obstinate in adhering to his opinions, though, among his friends, entertaining and jocose. Melancthon was mild, humble, moderate, exceedingly grave, studious of peace, and ready to concede almost any thing for the sake of it; nay even timid, hesitating, and indecisive in every thing." While giving this somewhat exaggerated description of the points of difference between the two characters, the writer has neglected to observe, that in the great principles which governed them both they were indissolubly united. "The love of Christ constrained" them. Zeal for God, regard for the good of mankind, both spiritual and temporal, and an ardent attachment to divine truth ruled in both their hearts, and prompted their conduct: and they in whom such principles prevail are "taught of God to love one another." When this great basis of union was laid, it is obvious also that many of the qualities enumerated would adapt them to each other, rather than the contrary. Each was suited to supply somewhat that the other wanted, or to moderate somewhat in which he was prone to exceed. Each accordingly felt how much he owed to the other, both personally

and in the great work which they were jointly carrying on: and hence their attachment was affectionate and uninterrupted.¹

I am willing here to adopt, perhaps with a little reserve in some clauses, the sentences of a modern biographer of Melancthon. "The profound learning and cultivated taste of the one, the vigorous zeal, independent spirit, and dauntless heroism of the other, alike conduced to dissipate the delusions of the age. Both adopted the same general views; and each was equally solicitous of removing that veil of Egyptian darkness that overspread the face of the world: yet they were constitutionally different. . . . Truth would undoubtedly have suffered, had the one been less energetic or daring, or the other less moderate and cultivated. . . . If the reformation claimed the steady efforts of true courage and inextinguishable zeal, be it remembered also, that it no less required a proportion of nice discernment, elegant taste, and literary skill: if a superstition, which invested a mortal with the prerogative of infallibility, were to be attacked and levelled with the dust, the ignorance, which, with its characteristic blindness, supported that superstition, was at the same time to be dethroned and demolished: if old abuses were to be removed, and a new order of things to be introduced and systematized, it was desirable to find not only a nervous arm, but a polished mind, at once to clear away the rubbish of error, and clothe unwelcome novelties with attractive beauty: in a word, if existing circumstances called for a MARTIN LUTHER, they also demanded a PHILIP MELANCTHON."²

But some of the leading excellences which dis-

¹ See Melancthon's acknowledgment of his obligations to Luther, in his will, above, p. 130. Of Luther's reciprocal regard and obligations we may admit Maimbourg's testimony: "Luther, in return, loved him so tenderly, and esteemed him so highly, that by him alone would he suffer himself to be admonished and moderated under excessive irritation."

² Cox's Life of Melancthon.

tinguished the great father of the reformation, and which especially endear him to the truly Christian mind, are wholly passed over in the review which has thus far been made of his character. We will not affirm quite so much as this of the sterling and uncompromising *honesty*, which is one of the features that most stands out from the canvas in his genuine portrait: yet even this has not been presented with the prominence that belongs to it. Can any one read over the history of Luther which is now before him, the detail of his actual sayings and doings, without feeling that, if ever honesty and integrity were embodied, it was in him? He avowed nothing but what he conscientiously believed: he kept back nothing which conscience dictated to be avowed. Can any man of common fairness doubt this? For myself I must confess, that I never read of the man in whom I felt compelled to place a more unreserved reliance, both for the truth of all his declarations and the uprightness of all his intentions.

And then, not only was his belief of all he taught most sincere, it was also most thoroughly practical and influential. He himself daily lived upon that bread of life which he broke to others. The doctrines which he preached to mankind were the support of all his own hopes, the spring of all his comforts, the source of his peace of mind, of his strength for service or for suffering in the cause of God, the principles which evermore governed and animated him; raised him above the fear of man, and the love of the world, and carried him, with a heroic elevation of soul, through a series of labours and dangers, never perhaps surpassed since the days of the apostle Paul. In the genuine doctrines of the gospel, and especially in that of our being "justified freely, by God's grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;" and this inestimable benefit appropriated only by a living faith, and not by our own works or deservings; he found that which could alone relieve his own con-

science from an anxiety amounting, at times, even to anguish, and for want of which he saw the whole Christian world around him groaning under a system of delusion, imposition, and bondage the most intolerable and ruinous: and what he had thus found to be the relief and salvation of his own soul, he could not but proclaim to others also. "Neither counted he his life dear unto himself, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus, *to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*" Never probably did there exist the man who could more truly say with S. Paul, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom (or by *which*) the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." And this assuredly, in all its parts, is the state of mind which is especially wanting to us, to give more effect to our ministrations; to draw down a larger measure of the divine blessing upon them. May He, with whom is "the residue of the Spirit," indeed raise up among us *a new race* of such "men of God," by whom he may indeed revive his church wherever it is decayed, reform it wherever it is corrupted, unite it wherever it is divided, and extend it wherever it is not yet planted; that "the wilderness and the solitary place may be glad for them, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose!"

In short, the great charm of Luther's character, and that from which the other excellences admired in him, even by those for whom *this* may have less attractions, derived their origin or their support, was his *spirituality*. His whole heart and soul were in religion; not in the barren *notion* of its truths, or in its mere exterior *observances*, but in the communion with God by which it is produced and cherished; in the love of God and of man, in the "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost," in the penitence, the faith, the devotion, the deadness to the world, the heavenly mindedness, in which it consists;

and in all the practical fruits of righteousness and usefulness which it brings forth.—The reader will not forget his correspondence at the period especially of the diet of Augsburg, or the account, given by his companion at Coburg, of those retired devotions, by which his Christian heroism was sustained. He will recall to mind perhaps the manner in which he has heard Luther speak of his daily exercising himself on the common truths of the catechism: and he will not be displeased to receive the further testimony, borne to his devotional spirit, in the oration before referred to, which Melancthon pronounced at his funeral. “Often have I myself gone to him un-awares, and found him dissolved in tears and prayers for the whole church of Christ. He commonly devoted a portion of every day to the solemn recitation of some of the Psalms of David, with which he mingled his own supplications, with sighs and tears: and often has he declared, that he could not help feeling a sort of indignation at those who, through sloth, or under the pretence of other occupations, hurried over devotional exercises, or contented themselves with mere ejaculatory prayer. On this account, he said, divine wisdom has prescribed some formularies to us, that our minds may be inflamed with devotional feeling in reading them—to which, in his opinion, reading aloud very much conduced. When therefore a variety of great and important deliberations respecting public dangers have been pending, we have witnessed his prodigious vigour of mind, his fearless and unshaken courage. Faith was his sheet anchor, and, by the help of God, he was resolved never to be driven from it.”

And in this place also may be introduced the noble application, which bishop Atterbury has made to him of a sublime passage of S. Paul’s writings. It is in his defence of Luther’s discontinuing the observance of the “canonical hours,” or that daily repetition of forms of devotion, to which the Romish ritual obliges

the clergy. "His active spirit," the bishop says, "was employed upon things more acceptable to God Almighty, because more useful to mankind. He was *wrestling against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.* To this end, he took unto him the whole armour of God, that he might be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand. He stood therefore, having his loins girded about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all taking the shield of faith; wherewith he was able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And he took the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: still praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance, and supplication for all saints; and for himself, that utterance might be given unto him, that he might open his mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel.—I could not forbear," the bishop declares, "setting down at full length this panoply of S. Paul, wherewith Luther completely armed himself in his spiritual warfare: and I do not know whether this description so justly belongs to any man as to him, since the days of the apostles."¹

The following particulars of Luther's manners in private life, collected by Melchior Adam, may not be uninteresting to the reader.

At meal times he frequently dictated sentiments to be written down by others, or corrected proof sheets of his works. Sometimes he entertained himself and his guests with music. When invited to entertainments he frequently did not go, that he might not waste his time; and he often complained that it was esteemed uncivil to decline invitations, while yet it

¹ Answer to Considerations on the Spirit of Luther, &c. p. 42.

was injurious to accept them.—When he wished to relax himself from study, he took pleasure in playing at chess, in which he was very skilful. He practised also the art of turning; and sometimes threw at a mark. He was fond of horticulture, and collected seeds from his various friends for the improvement of his garden. His liberality to the poor was unbounded and almost excessive. When a student on a journey once solicited assistance, which his wife declined, pleading the want of money, Luther took up a silver cup and gave it to him, telling him to sell it and keep the money. On another occasion, two hundred pieces of gold having been sent him from the mines, he distributed the whole among the poorer scholars at Wittenberg. When the elector John once sent him a present of clothing, he wrote him word back, that it was ‘more than he wished: if he was thus to receive the reward of all his labours in this life, there would remain none for the life to come.’ The same prince having offered him a share in some mines, he declined it, lest it should become a snare to him. He mentions also that he took no money from his printers, but only such copies of his books as he had occasion for, and those but few.—He was exceedingly affectionate to his family, and took great care of their education, keeping a tutor in the house to instruct them. When he saw the death of his elder daughter, Magdalene, approaching, he read to her that passage of Isaiah xxvi, “Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead. Come my people, enter thou into thy chamber, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpassed.” He then said, ‘My daughter, enter thou into thy resting place in peace: I shall soon be with thee, for God will not suffer me to see the evils that are coming upon Germany.’ Saying

this he wept profusely: but at the funeral he so restrained himself in public, as not to shed a single tear.

In person, he was of the middle size, strongly built. His eye was brilliant and penetrating, so that not every one could bear to meet its full gaze. It is said that a man, once sent to assassinate him, was so overpowered by his glance, that he hastily retired from his presence. His voice was neither powerful nor very clear.

He lived happily in the married state for more than twenty years. His widow (who survived him seven years,) was compelled by the wars, which followed her husband's death, to lead, in some degree, a wandering life. At length, on being driven from Wittemberg by the plague, she removed to Torgau: but the horses taking fright by the way, she leaped from the carriage in which she was travelling, more from anxiety about her children than herself; and was so much injured by her fall that she died three months after, at the age of fifty-two.

The following sentences are quoted from him by the same biographer.

"As the fruit never produces the tree, so works never make the man good. The tree must first be produced, and then the fruit follows: so a man being first made good, good works follow—not to make him good, but to testify that he *is* good."

On temptations, particularly, we must suppose, those of blasphemous thoughts, he advises, "First, that the tempted should avoid solitude, and should converse with others on passages of the Psalms, and other parts of scripture: then, as a very effectual remedy, though one difficult to be applied, that they should persuade themselves that the thoughts which harass them are not their own, but Satan's, and so not attempt to reason with them and overcome them, but turn away from them, and apply their minds to

something else; for to do otherwise would only exasperate the evil to a dangerous degree."

I would in conclusion add an observation on the real nature of our obligations to the blessed and venerable reformers of the sixteenth century. The reader will not be surprised at my expressing an utter disapprobation of all such sentiments as the following: "That the reformers are to be honoured *chiefly* for the grand principles of Christian liberty which they so strenuously asserted and maintained—the detail of doctrine and practice will always occasion difference of opinion: that they were too tenacious of their particular creed—but that this period was only the dawn of religious discovery." All this is catering most offensively to the corrupt taste of a lukewarm and latitudinarian age. I trust I honour the reformers, as much as any man can do, for "strenuously asserting and maintaining in the face of the most powerful opponents"—so far as they really did assert and maintain them—"the grand principles of Christian liberty:" but I conceive that they did this, to say the least, not at all more perfectly than they "asserted and maintained," and brought forward into open day "the grand principles of Christian" TRUTH: that, as far as they succeeded, they were "the restorers of *light*"¹—the pure light of the gospel—not at all less than of "liberty," to the Christian church, which had for ages been "sitting in darkness and the shadow of death."—"The detail of doctrine and practice will," no doubt, "always," while the state of mankind continues what it is, "occasion difference of opinion:" but we are not on this ground to be left to conclude that truth, even on the most essential points, cannot be ascertained. There has been unspeakably less difference of opinion in such matters, among really good men in all ages, than is commonly supposed. No doubt also the reformers might be

¹ Robertson.

“too tenacious of their particular creed, and,” in some cases, “inconsistent with themselves”: but let us not, under the cover of positions which none can deny, as applied to minor parts of the reformers’ system, be led to conclusions which none should admit concerning the great outlines of their doctrine.—And with extreme caution is the suspicious statement to be received, of “this period being only the dawn of religious discovery.” Let no inexperienced reader ever suppose, that religious truth can be the subject of “discovery,” in any such sense as latent principles or hitherto unobserved phenomena in chemistry or in geology may be; or that one age can improve upon the theological science of another preceding it, any otherwise than by returning to the more simple and more unreserved reception of the unerring disclosures, which were completed to the Christian church in its very infancy, in the only source of all religious knowledge—“THE ORACLES OF GOD.” And, in the “discovery” and exhibition of all the *leading* principles of these repositories of divine wisdom, I am persuaded no class of teachers has surpassed the great luminaries of the reformation. Yes, it is upon this ground above all others—by their having asserted to the sacred writings, as they did, that sole and exclusive authority which is their inalienable right, and having deduced from them all the great truths of pure and undefiled religion—that the reformers have established a claim to our eternal gratitude. “These men were the servants of the most high God, shewing unto us”—after it had been obscured and almost lost for ages—“THE WAY OF SALVATION.”¹ Yes,

“ Their blood was shed
In confirmation of the noblest claim,
Our claim to feed upon IMMORTAL TRUTH,
To walk with God, to be DIVINELY free,
To soar, and to anticipate the skies.”

¹ “By Luther and his fellow-labourers,” says Melchior Adam, “God brought to light to his church those most essential doctrines which

We have given some account of the writings of Luther as far as the end of the year 1541. His principal publications in 1542, in addition to some already mentioned, were a commentary on the prophet Micah; a translation into German, with a preface and notes, of a work of Richard the Dominican (a writer whom he supposes to have lived early in the fourteenth century,) on the Koran; and prefaces to an epitome of the Conformities of S. Francis, and to the postils of John Spangenberg, subsequently superintendent of Mansfeldt.

The work of Richard had excited his curiosity concerning the Koran. He could not for some time believe that rational beings could be found to receive propositions so monstrous, as it professed to exhibit from the Koran: but he had since obtained a Latin translation of the work of the Arabian impostor, and had found that there was no fiction in Richard's charges. He wished therefore to make them known to his countrymen, at a time when the Mahometans were so much spreading their conquests, and with

respect the Mediator, the way of justification, the difference between the law and the gospel, the nature of acceptable worship, and other subjects of vital importance."—He then quotes the following testimony of Melancthon concerning Luther. "He often bewailed the impious addresses made to departed saints, and said, For various reasons such a profane practice is to be execrated, but especially because it obscures the evidence of the deity of Christ, arising from the divine honours which we are taught to pay to him, in the scriptures both of the prophets and the apostles. This is the idolatry which whets the cimeters of the Turks against us: nor will our blood cease to be shed by them, unless a pious reformation be made. Who can deny the gross impiety of such sentences as these, which are constantly heard in the papal churches:

‘ O Mary, mother of grace,
Defend us from the enemy !
Receive us in the hour of death !’

And again:

‘ O Saint Dorothy, create in me a clean heart !’

‘ O Saint Catharine, remove us from the troubles of this world to the bliss of paradise ! Open to us the gates of paradise ! ’”—Is not this justly styled the *idolatry* of popery—withdrawn from view perhaps in such a country as our own, but still retained where the public mind will bear it ?

them their religion in Europe. He takes occasion therefore to introduce many admonitions and addresses suitable to the times.

The Conformities of S. Francis he wished to keep before the public eye, that it might not be forgotten what things had really been taught under the papacy. Many now affected to disbelieve that such things had actually been written and received; many were found to soften them down or varnish them over, especially in the diets:¹ not that the papists had renounced them; they only kept them in the back ground, to reproduce them at a more favourable opportunity; and we may easily, says Luther, relapse into them, if we prove ungrateful for the benefits conferred upon us, and thus provoke God to withdraw his grace from us.

In his preface to Spangenberg he dwells at some length on the term "mystery," applied by S. Paul to the gospel, and particularly (Eph. v.) to the union between Christ and the church. When he first set out, he says, "he thought that he well understood all this, as many other smatterers now did; but, when he had made some little progress, he found that it was indeed a mystery, which too much pains could not be taken to understand and unfold." He laments however that many wrote, "not to make known this mystery, but that their own fine thoughts might not be lost: and they then set both themselves and their books to sale. But such men would never effect any thing in the church of God." On the contrary, he reprehends idle preachers, who contented themselves with "repeating, like parrots and jack-daws, only what others had written." Men could not, he maintains, too diligently study the scriptures, too earnestly teach what they learned from them, or too carefully illustrate what they taught by their own life and conversation.

The next year Luther engaged in the controversy

¹ As latterly in the houses of Lords and Commons.

against the Jews. When it became known that Hebrew studies were cultivated at Wittenberg, it gave spirits to the members of the Jewish communion; which were further raised by some of the German fanatics embracing their profession. In consequence three of their learned men came to dispute with Luther. He treated them kindly till he found their obstinacy and virulence; and then he wrote with some severity "Against the Jews and their falsehoods." He thinks it useless to discuss the Christian mysteries with them, their prejudice and hardness are so great: he would rather employ arguments against them drawn from their circumstances during fifteen hundred years past, which were such as had been predicted by Jesus Christ, and evidently shewed the anger of God resting upon them. Their boasted privileges and distinctions were to be treated as worthless, when separated from faith and piety. Nothing was to be expected from them, till, softened by their calamities, they should listen to the proofs drawn from their own prophets, that the Messiah was come.

Among the minor writings of Luther at this period, a preface may deserve to be mentioned, which he prefixed to some Latin declamations composed and delivered by the elector's sons, boys of thirteen and fourteen years of age. Luther here expresses great joy at the progress of learning, (so different from what had been under the papacy!) at the elector's manner of training his sons, and at the good hopes which they afforded him; and concludes with offering fervent prayers for them, and for others of their rank, adapted particularly to the times in which their lot was cast. It is a pleasing spectacle which this little publication presents to us, both of the elector's family, and of the regard which Luther bore to them.

In the year 1544, Luther published again on the eucharist, treating the Zwinglians with lamentable severity.

A letter of Luther's to Spalatinus, prefixed as a preface to a collection which that worthy person had made of the examples and sayings of pious men, contains many excellent sentiments. "I am much pleased, my dear Spalatinus, with your design of collecting the acts and sayings of the saints of God; and I doubt not that it will be acceptable to God himself, and to the people of God. Things of this kind tend not only to stop the mouths of those who reproach us as introducing new doctrines, but also to confirm our own minds by the testimony of so great a cloud of witnesses, who have thought, and spoken, and acted, and suffered in the same manner with ourselves. For, though each one's own faith in the word of God ought to support his resolution of standing, though it were alone, in the conflict against the gates of hell, yet even when the spirit is willing the flesh is weak; and therefore it is a great confirmation to the pious mind to trace in so many excellent men, through successive ages, the same things as it meets with in its own daily experience. Even by the best of men, indeed, there have been many things said and done under the influence of the flesh, and the law of sin warring against the law of the mind, according to what we read in Romans vii; to say nothing of the falsehoods which have been foisted into their histories by the children of the wicked one: yet, when the confession of sin and the struggle against it are concerned, we see how purely and constantly they avow their faith. What could have been said more pious, or more becoming in S. Ambrose, than when, in his last conflict against sin, death, the wrath of God, and the threats of hell, he boldly pronounced to the presbyters who stood about him, 'I have not so lived as to be ashamed to continue among you; nor do I fear to die, since we serve a gracious Master.' S. Augustine, in his last agony, as Possidonius relates, highly commended this sentiment of Ambrose. The same Augustine also com-

forted himself against the charges of conscience (the source of severest trial in the hour of death,) in the following words: 'I shall be troubled but not distressed, because I think on the sufferings of my Saviour.' Who does not see, that in sentences like these the most holy men declare their faith in Christ, a faith sole and exclusive, yet firm, and victorious over sin and death? For, though they judge their life to be irreproachable among men, (as it ought to be, and must be,) yet before God they rely entirely on his mercy and grace, and fly to the wounds of Christ, as the doves to the clefts of the rock.—We do well, therefore, first to separate the histories of the saints from the falsehoods with which they have been mixed up, and then, rightly dividing the word of truth, to try them by the rule and analogy of faith—according to the apostolic direction, *Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.* But what room would there be for this admonition, if all that was said and done by the saints were to be received implicitly, like articles of faith? No: they were holy men, but yet *men*; in whom divine grace had still to struggle against corrupt nature. Where therefore they spoke and acted under the influence of the Spirit, their sayings and actions are worthy to be preserved, as what the Lord Christ wrought in them; but, where the contrary, there we are to bear with them, and consider this as permitted for our encouragement, since we see that the saints of God were infirm beings like ourselves, and each one of them bore about with him in his flesh the remains of sin.—On these accounts I wish your book to be published: but do not bestow upon me such lavish—if I did not know your sincerity, I should say, such false—commendation. I know that I am nothing. Farewell in the Lord! Pray for me, that I may have a happy transition from this body of sin and death! Amen. 8 March, 1544."

George Heltus of Forcheim has been mentioned.

as the preceptor of Prince George of Anhalt and other eminent persons. We will here insert part of a letter from Luther to George of Anhalt on his death. It is dated March 9, 1545.

“Grace and peace to you in Christ! So then, most illustrious prince, our friend Heltus is gone, leaving us to lament him! O my God, at a time when we have need of many holy men to comfort and strengthen us by their prayers, their counsels, and their assistance, thou takest away even the few that are left us! We know, O God, that the prayers and the labours of the departed saint, who most ardently loved and zealously served thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and was most useful to thy church, were well-pleasing in thy sight.—Certainly I myself placed great confidence in his prayers, and derived great consolation from them. How severe a wound then must you have suffered, most excellent prince, by the removal of one with whom you lived on terms of such faithful and endeared friendship. But it is well with *him*. Gathered to his fathers and to his people, he finds more and better companions there than he has left behind. But our lot is trying, who live, or drag on a sort of dying existence, here in Sodom and Babylon, and find the number of good men diminish in proportion as the state of things, daily declining towards what is worse, requires an increase of them. But the wisdom of God is to be adored, who, when he is about to accomplish something great, and surpassing our hopes, first seems to annihilate all expectation, and to reduce us to despair: as it is written, ‘He bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up again.’ He does this, to teach us the exercise of faith, hope, and love towards him; and that we may learn to esteem things not seen above those which do appear; and ‘against hope to believe in hope;’ and to depend on him who ‘callest things which are not as though they were.’ Then, while he takes away from us all his most plea-

sant gifts, and exhibits himself to us as if his kindness and his loveliness had come utterly to an end, at that very time he is thinking most especially, I might almost say anxiously, the thoughts of love towards us. By means like these it is that the old man is slain, 'the body of sin destroyed.'—Wherefore comfort yourself, most excellent prince, according to the rich measure in which it has been given you to know God the Father and his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and to meditate on all the operations of his hands. It shall be my prayer, that the God of all consolation would confirm and strengthen you by his Holy Spirit, until the appointed end of these trials is accomplished. For, as it is said in Jeremiah, 'He doth not willingly grieve the children of men.' And Augustine says, 'God would not permit evil to exist, if he had not some greater good to bring out of it.'—We are yet in the flesh, and know not what to ask or how to ask it; that is, to ask what is good for us: but He, who is able to do above all we ask or think, 'careth for us:' he can do for us beyond what the narrowness of our hearts allows us to desire, or even to imagine. But it is necessary, in order to his doing this, that he should first take from us those things which we think we cannot do without; or at least think that their absence would occasion us great injury or great danger. Scripture abounds with examples to this effect. Adam and Eve were almost intoxicated with high expectations from Cain: God deprived them of both their sons, and almost reduced them to despair: but then He that quickeneth the dead, and createth all things out of nothing, gave them 'another seed,' and an unfailing posterity. Abraham promised himself great things from Ishmael, Isaac from Esau, Jacob from Reuben, his first-born; but all these hopes must receive a death-blow, that new and immortal hopes might take their place. God is mighty and faithful: he promises and he performs.—Let us bewail our departed friend then

because 'his light is lost,' as the son of Sirach says, yet not to himself but to us. To him his light burns more brightly, and shall burn for ever. Soon too our light shall fail here, but be rekindled and perfected in that better state, through him who is at once our Light and our Life. Amen! In Him may your highness ever fare well!"

We may remark from this letter, as from many other passages of his writings, how much Luther's distinguishing excellences, his faith, his wisdom, his fervour, his heroism, the richness of his instructions, were derived from his being so intimately conversant with every part of scripture. He read it daily and most diligently. In all its contents it was continually passing in review before him.

The most elaborate work of Luther published in the year 1545 was a commentary on the prophet Hosea. In this he points out how great a proportion of the messages of the prophets are easily applicable to our own times; exposes the false candour of leaving the papists unmolested in their errors; and throughout makes powerful attacks upon them.

The elector and the landgrave both scrupulously abstained from checking the reformer in what he thought proper to write and publish: so high an opinion did they entertain of his wisdom, and of the effect of his writings. Even when King Ferdinand, having read his book "Against the Pope," published this year, observed that, "if the language were but softened, it was not in other respects to be found fault with;" the elector replied, "Dr. Martin is a man of a singular spirit, which suffers not itself to be restrained in these matters. No doubt he has weighty reasons for this strong language. He is stirred up in an extraordinary manner against the papacy, to overthrow it, not to amend it—for that is impossible. Mild language therefore would be out of place."—When the offensiveness of a picture prefixed to the book was further represented, the elector still replied,

that "Luther's spirit was extraordinary, and that he had further views in the particular means he employed than all could^y penetrate; on which account neither his (the elector's) father, John, nor his uncle Frederic would at all prescribe to him; nor would he himself presume to do it."—Though certainly it is to be wished, for the sake of posterity at least, and I conceive also for the sake of his own contemporaries, that Luther had moderated his style, yet the wisdom and forbearance of the three electors in not venturing out of their proper province, to direct, or even to regulate the movements of their subject—an extraordinary man, evidently raised up for an extraordinary service—are greatly to be admired; and we knew not how much they might have marred the work, had they attempted to do otherwise.

This year Luther wrote the preface to the first volume of his collected works. An interesting and important extract from it has been given in an early part of our history.¹ We shall here add a few sentences, which conspire with many other passages in his various compositions, to shew the very modest estimate which he formed of his own writings. "I long and stoutly held out," he says, "against those who wished to have my books, or rather the confused mass of my lucubrations, collected and published together. I opposed this, both because I would not have attention drawn off from ancient writers by my new publications, and because now, through the grace of God, there exist many orderly works, particularly the Common Places of Melancthon, by which the divine and the pastor of the church may be thoroughly furnished especially since the sacred writings themselves may now be had in almost every language; while my compositions, prompted and even compelled by the course of events, are a sort of rude and undigested chaos, which I myself can hardly reduce to any order." He had wished them

¹ Vol. i. p. 42.

therefore "to sink into oblivion, and to give way to somewhat better." He was obliged however to yield to the importunities of his friends, (who urged that, if he did not collect and arrange them, some would attempt it after his death, who knew not the circumstances and occasions of the several pieces,) as well as to the pleasure and commands of the elector.—Then follows the passage already given in which he entreats the reader to peruse his writings "with discrimination, and even with great compassion," considering what an infatuated papist he had originally been, and with what difficulty he had surmounted his prejudices.

In like manner he says, in the preface to his Commentary on the book of Genesis: "I am not one who can be said to have accomplished what he aimed at, or even to have made an approach towards the accomplishment of it: I must take my station in the last and lowest rank, as one who scarcely dares to say, 'I desired to accomplish it.' I speak every thing extemporaneously, and in a style adapted to the common people. Not that I am conscious of having spoken what is false: but I have aimed only at avoiding obscurity, and at making myself fully understood."

From the coincidence of the subject, I shall take occasion here to insert a letter of his to Brentius, pastor of Halle, in Suabia, though written at an earlier period—1530. It well deserves to be read for the fine spirit which it breathes, and for the answer which it furnishes to the charges of arrogance, to which Luther's bold and uncompromising opposition to every thing that he conceived to be a corruption of divine truth exposed him. It accompanied or was prefixed to Brentius's Commentary on the prophet Amos.

"Grace and peace to you in Jesus Christ our Lord! I return you, my dear friend, your Amos, which you sent me long ago. It is not my fault that

it has not been published sooner, but that of the person to whom you entrusted it. In the humility of your heart you submitted your work entirely to my judgment, that I should alter, add, expunge, at my pleasure: but far be it from me to do any thing of the kind. It is in no case very creditable to exercise one's ingenuity in working upon another man's foundation: and, among Christians, it would be intolerable for one man to set up for master over others who are taught by the same Spirit. It is enough 'to prove the spirits, whether they are of God;' and, *that* being once ascertained, we ought instantly to shew reverence, to lay aside all magisterial airs, and humbly to sit down as scholars: for it is impossible for the Holy Spirit to speak, without delivering truths before which every man should bow, and receive them with childlike simplicity.

"But, beside this general deference to what the Spirit teaches, I declare to you that my own writings are very mean in my eyes, when compared with your's, and those of men like you. I do not here flatter you, or put on an assumed humility. I am not praising Brentius, but the Spirit with which he is endued, and which shews itself in him much more mild, gentle, and calm than in me. Then also your composition is much more skilful than mine: your language flows much more pure, clear, and neat; and thus is more attractive and more efficient. My manner is, to pour forth a torrent and chaos of words.—Moreover it is my destiny to be engaged in an endless succession of fierce conflicts with monsters that baffle description: so that, if it be allowable to use such a comparison, I seem to resemble the fire and the blustering wind in Elijah's vision, while you and your associates are the 'still small voice'—a gentle air which refreshes, and softens, and unbinds. Your writings therefore please me, and much more will they please others, better than my own. I comfort myself however with this thought, that the great

heavenly Lord and Father, in the amplitude of his household, has work for servants of different descriptions, and some must be like hard wedges to cleave rugged blocks. God must appear in thunder, as well as in the gentle rain: by his lightning and thunder he agitates and purifies the air, and thus prepares for rendering the earth more richly fruitful.

“ But I especially admire in you this gift of God, that in all your writings you so faithfully and clearly set forth ‘ the righteousness of faith : ’ for this is the head corner stone which supports, nay gives existence and life to the church of God ; so that without it the church cannot subsist for an hour. No one can teach rightly in the church, nor successfully withstand any of her enemies, who does not hold fast the sound doctrine on this head. I have often felt a mixture of surprise and indignation, that such men as Jerome and Origen should have been considered as, next to the apostles, master-builders in the church ; when you can scarcely find three sentences in either of them setting forth this doctrine. Nor would the case have been different with Augustine, but for his controversies with the Pelagians. They compelled him to maintain the righteousness of faith. Thus he became a true father of the church ; and almost the only one after the apostles and its first founders. Not that I would undervalue ‘ the fathers ; ’ but I think all ought to be admonished to read their writings with a discriminating judgment—according to the rule, ‘ Prove all things.’ Those who read them otherwise are tossed about with the winds of uncertainty ; ‘ ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.’ This we ourselves experienced, till the grace of God guided us from the troubled sea into a safe harbour, and set our feet upon this sure rock.—Go on then, my friend, strenuously asserting this truth on every occasion, and even to the satiety of many : for the world is full of writers and declaimers who neglect

it, or persecute it, or corrupt it. And no wonder: for this it is which is to crush the serpent's head. Satan therefore cannot fail to direct his opposition against it."

To the last year of Luther's life are to be referred his commentaries on the prophecies of Joel, and on the book of Genesis. He had delivered a previous exposition of Joel, about the year 1536: but the latter was more full and complete. His exposition of Genesis forms of itself an immense folio volume. Like most of his other expositions, it was delivered in lectures, and not intended for publication, but was taken down by Cruciger, Rorarius, and Vitus Theodorus, and submitted to Luther's correction. It was begun in the year 1536, and not finished till November 1545, within three months of the author's death. It was published in parts, to the first of which Luther himself wrote the preface, an extract from which has already been given. He says further, "I entered upon my lectures on Genesis with no view to their publication, but for the benefit of the students, and that I might keep the minds both of myself and of my audience exercised upon the word of God, and might not spend my old age in sloth and uselessness. I was excited by the words of the Psalm, 'I will sing unto the Lord while I have any being.'" He dwells repeatedly on the subsequent inspired writers having drawn so much from the books of Moses, and recommends this to be studiously traced. The book of Genesis he speaks of as a very delightful one, and prays God to raise up persons to do more justice to it than he could do. "I can accomplish no more," he said, as he closed his exposition, "I am infirm: pray that God would grant me a happy dismissal!" He often said, that he could wish to end his life with the exposition of the book of Genesis: and he failed little of having his desire, for he is related never again to have entered the lecture-room after he had finished it.

In speaking of the works of Luther, Melancthon notices four changes of doctrine which had taken place in the church between the times of the apostles and the reformation. The first he calls the *Origenian*, in which the church was corrupted by philosophy, and which thus led the way to the errors of Pelagius. The next was the *Augustinian*—"God having raised up the bishop of Hippo to correct the prevailing errors:" and with his doctrine he was satisfied that that of Luther agreed, notwithstanding the dishonest attempts made to prove the contrary. The third was the long reign of ignorance and Rome. The fourth he refers to S. Francis and S. Dominic, who aimed to correct the crying abominations of the times, but, through want of better information, plunged the church in superstition, and substituted the philosophy of Aristotle for the religion of Jesus Christ. All good men, he says, desired a purer doctrine, as well as a reformation of manners: and God graciously raised up Luther to be the instrument of introducing it.

He distributes the writings of the great reformer into three classes—didactic, controversial, and expository: the first laying down the true Christian doctrine on all the most material points; the second refuting the numerous errors opposed to it; and the third illustrating and applying the inspired writings, in all the various ways that the circumstances of mankind required. And the last class, he says, "even by the confession of enemies, surpassed all other expositions that were extant." But there was another work of Luther's which stood alone, and which, both in labour and in usefulness, Melancthon thinks "equalled all the rest"—his translation of the sacred scriptures into the German language; which was itself so luminously perspicuous as to supply the place of a commentary; and yet wanted not such an appendage, in the brief but learned annotations, and in the clear arguments of the several parts, which accompanied it. "It was Luther's desire,"

he finely remarks, in perfect conformity with what we have just heard from the reformer himself, "not to detain men upon his own writings, but to lead them to the original fountain of truth. He wished them to hear the voice of God himself. By that he desired to see true faith produced, and true prayer called forth, that God might be glorified, and numerous souls made heirs of eternal life."

Concerning the well-known work entitled "Luther's Table Talk," which, though it may contain many amusing and many good things, has yet been a fruitful source of those absurd stories and extravagant sayings, which have greatly lowered the character of Luther with many superficial readers; I subjoin the remark of Bishop Atterbury: "It is a book not received into the canon by the learned. It depends purely on the credit of one Van Sparr, that tells a blind story of his finding it in the ruins of an old house, many years after Luther, and Aurifaber the pretended compiler, were dead: but, should it be genuine, yet no fair adversary would urge loose *table talk* against a man in controversy, and build serious inferences upon what perhaps was spoken but in jest. It may serve to divert a reader, but is not fit to convince him."

CHAPTER XXVI.

The war of Smalkald—Elector of Saxony deposed, and Maurice advanced in his room—Conduct of John Frederic in captivity—The Interim established—Conduct of Melancthon.

It will easily be conceived how melancholy an impression would be made upon all peaceable and pious minds by the event of the 24th of July, 1546, when the diet of Ratisbon broke up, and both parties openly prepared for war.¹ It is interesting to be allowed to contemplate that impression, softened and alleviated by a devout resignation, as it is exhibited in the following letter of Melancthon to his friend Camerarius, dated only four days after.

“I thank you for repeatedly endeavouring to abate my sadness by your letters; particularly because I see that, in doing this, you endeavour to rise above your own distress, by means of the consolations which God has provided for us. I must confess that, under our common calamity, the thought of your affliction often increases my own: but I entreat you continue to support yourself with these consolations. Soothe your mind also in the society of your excellent wife and your sweet children.—Ah, but you will say,

¹ For the details of the Smalkaldic war the reader is referred to Robertson's Charles V, books viii. and ix.

when I look upon them it does but aggravate my anxiety.—True, it must do so sometimes. Yet consider that God makes the families of his servants the objects of his care, even amid the ruin of empires.—The present is not the first commencement of my painful feelings, or of my conviction that we should have to suffer oppression. Long since, as you well know, I have been deeply affected by observing, not only the fury of our enemies, but the vices and sins of our own people. Though therefore my feelings are more acute in this crisis of the calamity, yet, as in the case of diseases of long continuance, I have become in some degree prepared for it: and, while I revolve with myself all that is urged concerning the causes of the war, the characters and views of the leaders, the probable conduct of the military enterprises, their result, and what may be the event of the whole, I rest in the sentence of Gamaliel, ‘If this counsel, or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but, if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it:’ and with earnest sighs and prayers I seek a salutary issue for the church of God.—With my own private danger I am not much affected. Should I lose my life, and thus afford some little triumph to them that rejoice in iniquity, (whose number, alas! is great on every side,) their triumphing will be short. In such circumstances, conscious uprightness is a great support.—Some, I trust, have been enlightened by means of our instructions—which would have been more unexceptionable, but for the confusions of the times.—I have thus written briefly to you, to relieve your anxiety for me... Events, we may be assured, will be different from what either one party or the other anticipates.”

Melancthon had, no doubt, numbers throughout reformed Germany to sympathise with him in these pious sentiments, and in his sighs and prayers for the church—which, as his numerous epistles testify, he was never weary of offering: and such persons

were the true "chariots and horsemen" of their Israel, who did more for the cause in which they were embarked, than the troops of the elector and the landgrave could effect; and who, when the latter were defeated and dispersed, still availed to bring about happy events, "different from what had been anticipated by either party."

The actual commencement of hostilities on the part of the emperor was an event calculated to try the principle and steadiness of all professed protestants: and accordingly, while it displayed the firmness of the elector of Saxony and many chief members of the league, it detected the weakness of some, and the wickedness of others, who still avowed attachment to the protestant cause. The emperor's protestations, that he made not war on account of religion, but only to put down insubordination and to punish rebellion, imposed upon some, and furnished to others, who ought, upon every principle of honour and religion, to have appeared on the other side, a pretext for attaching themselves to him. Among those who weakly took part with the emperor we may reckon John of Brandenburg,¹ Eric of Brunswick, and George of Mecklenburg. Ulric of Württemberg and the city of Frankfort were also, at an early period, so far overawed as to join them; while Joachim elector of Brandenburg, and Frederic elector Palatine professed to stand neuter; and Maurice of Saxony, having, with deliberate and too successful villainy, formed the plan of possessing himself, by means of these troubles, of the dominions and dignities of the elector, avowed his reliance on the emperor's word for the safety of religion, and secretly entered into a treaty to support him in the contest. In the archbishop of Cologne, an aged ecclesiastic, who, though a sincere protestant, had never joined the league, and was now also under sentence of

¹ Above, p. 116.

deposition for his religion, the observance of neutrality, in obedience to the emperor's command, might well be excused.—On the other part, besides the elector of Saxony and the landgrave of Hesse, with the brother and the eldest son of the former; Philip duke of Brunswick Calenburg and his four sons, Francis duke of Lunenberg, Wolfgang prince of Anhalt, Christopher count Henneberg,² and Albert count Mansfeldt, openly ranged themselves. The city of Strasburg also did itself immortal honour by the part it acted, both at the commencement of the war, and after its conclusion. To it, in common with the other free cities in the protestant interest, the emperor addressed an insidious letter, professing to separate their cause from that of the princes of the same persuasion; representing that there existed a conspiracy against their liberties and those of Germany; and exhorting them to join him in putting down those traiterous persons who were their common enemies. The senate replied, in dutiful but decided terms, advocating the cause of the reformation, asserting the fidelity of the princes, (of which the emperor, they said, had had large experience in the wars against the Turks,) and insisting that he had been taught to think injuriously of them by the pope and his adherents, who were the real authors of the present counsels; and imploring him to pause and reflect before he involved Germany in all the horrors of civil war.

After all the artifice practised and the secret preparations made by the emperor, the zeal of the protestants, when they saw war to be inevitable, anticipated him. They were first ready, and in great force, (amounting to 70,000 foot and 15,000 horse,) to take the field: and, had it not been for the hesitation with which men, and especially conscientious men, strike the first blow in a civil war, it seems not improbable that they might have stormed his camp

¹ Above, p. 180.

at Ingoldstadt, and dispersed his half-collected army at the very outset. Before this also Schertel, a soldier of fortune, and an ancestor of the historian Seckendorf, at the head of some troops raised by the city of Augsburg, had the prospect of cutting off, at Inspruck, the pope's forces on their way to join the emperor: but he was timidly or injudiciously recalled by the elector and the landgrave.

These were only specimens of the manner in which the whole of the war was misconducted, in great measure in consequence of that divided and cöordinate authority vested in two chiefs, and those of such different characters, which has ever been found fatal to military operations. The great object pursued by the emperor was, to decline a battle, and, by wearying out the patience of the confederates, to induce them to separate; when his victory over each in succession would be sure. And in this design he eventually succeeded by the aid of Maurice.

When the elector quitted his own country to join the confederates, he committed his dominions to the protection of that prince—his next neighbour and his near relative; who had received great obligations from him, and professed, in common with himself, a zeal for the protestant faith: and Maurice, who had concealed his engagements to the emperor, with an artful appearance of friendship, undertook the charge. No sooner however had the emperor informally and illegally put the elector and the landgrave to the ban of the empire, than he sent Maurice a copy of his decree, and required him, on pain of incurring similar penalties, to seize and retain in his hands the forfeited estates of the elector; and Maurice, with whom it is probable the whole matter had been previously concerted, did not scruple, after some formalities observed for a decent shew of reluctance, to march into his kinsman's territories, and, with aid received from Ferdinand king of the Romans, to attack and

defeat his troops, and to take all things under his own administration.

This diversion had the desired effect. The elector indignant at such treachery, and afflicted at the accounts which he received of the sufferings endured by his subjects from licentious Hungarian soldiers, accustomed to the merciless modes of warfare practised against the Turks, became impatient to return home. In consequence, about the end of the year, the army of the confederates divided, and the greater part returned into their own countries under their respective leaders. The elector indeed succeeded in immediately rescuing his territories from the invaders, and in stripping Maurice for a time of nearly all his own dominions: but the separation of the army was the ruin of the cause. The emperor availed himself to the utmost of the advantage given him, and, with the exception of the elector and the landgrave, almost all the protestant princes and states were compelled to submit, to implore pardon in the most humiliating manner, and to pay heavy fines for the part they had taken. They were not allowed to make any stipulation with regard to their religion: indeed the subject was not permitted to be mentioned—in order to keep up the emperor's pretence, that the war, on his part, had no religious object.

On this painful occasion Melancthon writes to Cruciger, February 13, 1547: "At a time when our leaders had one of the most glorious causes that the history of the world presents, and when the eyes of all Europe were fixed upon them, how lamentably have they disgraced themselves! But by these examples God admonishes us to look for heavenly succour. In the confidence of obtaining it, let us bear our calamities with patience."

Various circumstances for a time restrained the emperor from marching into Saxony, but in the following spring these obstacles were removed, and on the 24th of April he engaged the elector at Muhlberg

on the Elbe, defeated and took him prisoner, and, in effect, terminated the war. Wittemberg indeed, then esteemed one of the strongest places in Germany, animated by the exhortations of the electress—"a woman no less distinguished by her abilities than her virtues"—still held out, and Charles was not in a condition to make himself master of it. This appears to have suggested to him the barbarous measure, intended to work upon the feelings of the elector's family, of bringing that justly venerated prince to a mock trial, before a court martial composed of Spanish and Italian officers, with the unrelenting duke of Alva at their head. By this court, simply on the ground of the emperor's invalid decree, which proclaimed him a rebel and traitor, he was sentenced to death. The unexpected personal danger of her beloved consort so subdued the spirit of the electress, that she immediately conjured him, by letters and messengers, to scruple no concession for his own preservation, and the relief of the anguish of his family: and the elector, who had been unmoved by his own danger, was induced by regard to their feelings to agree to terms of accommodation, to which he would not otherwise have listened. He consented to resign absolutely into the emperor's hands the electoral dignity, and to put him in possession of Wittemberg and of such other parts of his dominions as were yet unsubdued; and, in return, Charles engaged to spare his life, and to settle on him and his family the city of Gotha, and the small territory attached to it, with an annual pension of fifty thousand florins, to be paid out of the revenues of the electorate. He himself was to remain a perpetual prisoner.

Maurice, as the reward of his iniquity, was immediately put in possession of the electoral dominions, and some time after solemnly invested with the electoral dignity—which has ever since continued in the family of his brother, he himself having left no male

issue. Thus are the wicked often permitted here to practise and prosper, and the righteous subjected to oppression: but we shall see that the good elector, even in bonds, was regarded with veneration, and might justly have been considered as an object of envy, in comparison with either his heartless conqueror or his unprincipled relative—for both of whom chastisement was preparing.

The landgrave alone now remained in arms; and he was shortly after drawn, we may say trepanned, into submission. The emperor required him to surrender upon conditions to be dictated absolutely to him; and he was at length prevailed on, contrary to his own sentiments, to do it, having the guarantee of Maurice and the elector of Brandenburg for his personal liberty. In this however they, as well as the landgrave himself, were deceived. After the most abasing submissions in the emperor's presence, which were received with unfeeling and insulting neglect, he was suffered to retire, apparently at liberty, and was entertained by the duke of Alva: but, when after supper he rose to depart, the duke made known the orders he had received to detain him; and no intercessions, no representations whatever, could induce the emperor to release him, till after a lapse of five years he was compelled to do it by the reverse in his own affairs.

From these agitating, these irritating scenes, we turn to what is of a very different character, and much more in accordance with the design of our history—the meekly magnanimous, the sublimely Christian conduct of the late elector, John Frederic, in captivity. All authors agree in bestowing this high praise upon him; but I shall chiefly follow Thuanus, who, being a Roman-catholic, (though an eminently fair and candid one,) will be less suspected of partiality than protestant writers might be.

“The elector,” says this excellent author, “was

a great man, and, even by the testimony of his enemies, equal in courtesy, liberality, prudence, and invincible fortitude, to the most distinguished princes. In the judgment of all men, he rose superior to his adverse fortune by the constancy of his mind." "Though irresolute in council, he was bold in action." Accordingly his conduct at Muhlberg, from the time that an engagement had become unavoidable, is highly commended. When, after discharging the duties of a brave commander, wounded in the face, exhausted with fatigue, and nearly deserted by his followers, he surrendered himself a prisoner, he was conducted immediately to the emperor. On approaching him, the elector took off his glove, and was about to alight from his horse that he might take the hand of the conqueror, as was the custom in such cases: but Charles spurned his approach. "I yield myself your prisoner, most gracious emperor," said John Frederic, "and hope"—the emperor interrupted him: "And am I now then your emperor? Charles of Ghent was all you could lately call me." The elector unmoved, resumed—"I hope to be treated according to my rank." "You shall be treated according to your desert"—was all the reply the emperor vouchsafed him, instantly turning his back upon him. Ferdinand openly reproached him, using expressions still more ungenerous and insulting. The elector returned no answer, but, with an unaltered countenance, accompanied the soldiers appointed to guard him.

Duke Ernest of Brunswick was made prisoner with the elector, and they were conveyed together in the same chariot, being led as it were in triumph after the emperor in his further progress through Saxony. Such an exhibition of the fallen elector was extremely afflicting to his subjects, who both honoured and loved him. Melancthon thus pathetically notices his still accompanying the emperor wherever he went, in the same manner, nearly a year

and a half afterwards : “ A criminal judge precedes the army of the emperor, who is accompanied by the captives, and among them by our captive prince. O sad spectacle ! It often reminds me of the words, *He was numbered with the transgressors.*” — “ This indignity however was so far from subduing the elector’s spirit, that it did not even ruffle the wonted tranquillity and composure of his mind.”

This was strikingly illustrated when they arrived at Torgau, on their way from Muhlberg to Wittemberg. This town was adorned with one of the finest and most beautifully situated castles in Germany, which had been a hunting-seat of the electors of Saxony. “ Here,” said the elector to the Spanish officer who guarded him, “ Here is something to gratify Maurice, if his mind is at ease to enjoy to it.” His companion, Ernest, expressing surprise, and a degree of chagrin, that he should speak in this manner of his own losses, he replied : “ Why should I disquiet myself about things of this nature, which even while we retain them can hardly be called our own ?” When Ernest answered only by a deep sigh, he turned to him, and said in a lower tone, “ I would gladly instil into your mind the sentiments which I cherish in my own, and which are well suited to calm our passions—to subdue our regrets, and resentments, and desires of revenge. When any one is unable to preserve his external goods against a more powerful assailant, he may still fortify his mind by lessons of wisdom, and thus rise above his calamities, and even in captivity come off more than conqueror over his victorious foe.”

When the sentence of death, passed upon him by the emperor’s iniquitous court martial, was made known to him, he was amusing himself by playing at chess with his fellow-captive. He paused for a moment, and without discovering any symptom of surprise or terror, he observed, “ So then, if Wittemberg does not surrender, I must die—for I see

what is aimed at. Well, this does not dismay me. I wish it may no more affect my wife, and children, and friends, and that they may not, for the sake of adding a few days to a life already too long, renounce honours and possessions to which they were born." He added, "I do not however prohibit their yielding something for the satisfaction of their own feelings; but let them not in their solicitude for me, forget themselves." He then turned to his antagonist, whom he challenged to continue the game. He played with his usual attention and ingenuity; and, having beaten Ernest, expressed all the satisfaction which is usually felt on gaining such victories. After this, he withdrew to his own apartment, that he might employ the rest of his time in such religious exercises as were proper in his situation.

We have next to notice the deposed elector's invincible adherence to his religious principles under all circumstances.

When the terms were proposed to him on which his life should be spared, and some arrangement made for the benefit of his family, one of the articles prescribed was, that he should approve whatever the emperor, or the council of Trent, should determine in matters of religion. But, while he consented to resign all his earthly dignities and possessions, he peremptorily rejected this article; nor could even the fear of immediate death induce him to listen to it: so that the haughty emperor was obliged to order it to be struck out.

When he had languished a year longer in captivity, and the emperor had introduced, and was enforcing his scheme of religion, called the Interim, Charles, well knowing the influence which his prisoner's example would have with all the protestant party, laboured with the utmost earnestness to obtain his approbation of this formulary; and, by employing sometimes promises of setting him at liberty, sometimes threats of greater harshness, he attempted

alternately to work upon his hopes and his fears: but it was all in vain. "He was daily more and more confirmed," he said, "by the study of the sacred writings, in the truth of the doctrines he had embraced; and nothing could be more criminal in him than to act contrary to this conviction: it would be no less than the sin against the Holy Ghost, which can never be forgiven." He entreated the emperor, therefore, by all the mercies of God in Christ, that he would not urge him to any such violation of his duty, or misinterpret his refusal. He was not actuated, he said, by vain-glory, or by any other worldly consideration—"for what was there of that nature which could outweigh in his estimation, (especially considering his age and his habit of body,¹) the liberty of returning to repose at home in the society of his beloved wife and children?—but he aimed simply at this one object, by the true worship and service of God on earth, to come at length to the enjoyment of his heavenly kingdom. In all things else he had ever been, and ever would be ready to consult the emperor's wishes, and, as became an upright man, and one of his quality, would faithfully observe every engagement he had made to him."—This magnanimous conduct drew upon him fresh marks of the emperor's displeasure. The rigour of his confinement was increased; the number of his servants abridged; the chaplain, who had hitherto attended him, was obliged from regard to his own safety to withdraw in disguise; and even the elector's books of devotion were taken from him.

Some time after, the emperor caused the displeasure which he felt at the conduct of the elector's sons, in both rejecting the Interim themselves, and allowing their preachers to impugn it from the pulpit and the press, to be represented to him, and desired that he would interpose his authority with them in

¹ Extremely corpulent and unwieldy.—Yet Luther, in one of his latest works extols the laborious diligence of the elector.

these respects. But the elector replied, that he had before stated his own sentiments on the new scheme of doctrine; that they remained unaltered; and that he could not urge his children to do that which he could not with a good conscience do himself. He entreated the emperor therefore to view in a favourable light both his own conduct and that of his sons.

Another trying scene, which would have been overpowering to a worldly mind, served only to display still further his equanimity and Christian charity. At the diet held at Augsburg in the year 1548, Maurice was to be solemnly invested with the electoral dignity, of which John Frederic had been stripped; and, as if in wanton mockery of the deprived elector's feelings, this was done in the open market-place within sight of his lodgings. His attention being drawn by the acclamations of the people, he walked to the window, and, for a short time viewing the spectacle, observed, "With what exultation do the friends of Maurice congratulate his advancement to the dignity of which I am unjustly despoiled! Well, may this change have so peaceful and happy a result, that they may never have to regret the loss of me and my family." And he then returned to the devotional reading in which he chiefly passed his time.

After he had been dragged about, in the manner we have seen, during more than five years, such changes took place as no longer left the emperor any motive for detaining him. He accordingly obtained his liberty, and took possession of the small territory which had been reserved to his family, the districts of Jena and Weimar having been added to that of Gotha, in lieu of the pension originally stipulated. His return occasioned great joy to many, who had honoured him in his prosperity, and now still more revered him for his conduct under adversity. Melancthon thus celebrates the event, with affectionate delight, in a letter to a friend. "Though public

congratulations will outstrip my letters, I must announce to you, that, through the goodness of God, the duke of Saxony, John Frederic, is with his wife and children in Thuringia. His peaceful return is more glorious than a blood-stained triumph. Posterity will recount this among the proofs that God hears the sighs of the righteous, and relieves their troubles even in this life." Of his conduct, and the esteem in which he was held, after his return, Dr. Robertson says: "As in his new situation he continued to display the same virtuous magnanimity for which he had been conspicuous in a more prosperous and splendid state, and which he had retained amidst all his sufferings, he maintained during the remainder of his life that high reputation to which he had so just a title."

He survived his return only eighteen months, dying at Weimar March 3, 1554, at the age of fifty-one years, just after he had concluded with Augustus, the brother and successor of Maurice, an arrangement by which the electorate was to revert to his family in case that prince should leave no children. His wife (Sibylla of Cleves) died eleven days before him, having obtained the desire of her heart; for frequently she had been heard to say, that she could die with entire resignation, if she might but see her beloved husband once more return home, in possession of his liberty. When her tomb was preparing, he gave orders that a place should be reserved for him by her side, saying, that he should soon follow her.—"They both," says Sleidan, "died in the true knowledge of God:" and of the elector, in particular, he observes, "Having heard a sermon as he lay on his bed, he implored the divine mercy, and commended his spirit into the hands of God; and thus departed out of this miserable life, to enter into the heavenly state."

Of the sons of John Frederic nothing very memorable is recorded, except that, at their father's sugges-

tion, they became the founders of the university of Jena, intended to supply the loss of that of Wittemberg. The eldest passed nearly thirty years in captivity, and ended his days in that state, in consequence of an ill-advised attempt to retrieve the affairs of his family.

It would have been highly gratifying to present any accounts of the landgrave of Hesse similar to those which we have been reading of his old friend and ally: but, alas! his conduct in captivity in most points furnished a contrast to that of the elector. The treachery indeed (for it deserves no better name,) by which he had been deprived of his liberty, and the unfeeling cruelty with which his galling captivity was continued when no conceivable end remained to be answered by it, rouse our indignation even at this distance of time: yet his unabated impatience under his calamity, and the unworthy surrender even of his religious principles which he appears to have voluntarily offered, in order to obtain his liberty, while they excite our deepest regret, cannot escape our marked condemnation. He recovered his liberty about the same time with the elector of Saxony, and was reinstated in his dominions: but his sufferings appear to have broken the vigour and extinguished the activity of his mind. "From being the boldest, as well as the most enterprising prince in the empire, he became the most timid and cautious, and passed the remainder of his days in a pacific indolence."¹ On the whole we cannot but fear, (and we express the sentiment in this connexion with great pain,) that in him, as compared with the good elector of Saxony, we see illustrated the wide difference between the case of religion merely carrying conviction to the understanding, and calling forth the exertions of a mind naturally stirring and active, and one in which it thoroughly takes possession of the heart. In the

¹ Robertson.

former the time of trial will discover the essential deficiency : and then very probably even those useful qualities, which seemed most natural and inherent, not being supported by real Christian principle and divine grace, may fail ; while the other character, perhaps originally less vigorous, “ by waiting on the Lord renews his strength,” yea “ waxes stronger and stronger.”—“ The lamp ” of the elector we see burning brightly to the last, while that of the landgrave apparently goes out.

But we return to the more public transactions of the times. The emperor shewed no moderation in his use of the victory which he had obtained. Even before the battle of Muhlberg he had assumed the style of a conqueror, and dictated his own terms to the princes and cities which sought to make peace with him. Immediately after the battle, Bohemia, which had shewn a disposition to assert the liberty that by the constitution of its government belonged to it, and even to assist the elector of Saxony, was reduced under the almost absolute despotism of Ferdinand. In receiving the submission of the various states which were now compelled to bow to the emperor’s yoke, no mention, as we have seen, was permitted to be made of religion. That whole subject was reserved for the diet which met at Ulm on the 15th of June, and, by adjournment, at Augsburg, on the 1st of September, 1547. In both places the assembly was surrounded by the emperor’s victorious troops, prepared to mould its sentiments to conformity with their master’s wishes. Immediately on entering Augsburg, Charles took possession of the cathedral and some other churches, and, after they had been duly purified, restored the popish worship in them, so much in opposition to the wishes of the inhabitants, that it is said the poorer classes were bribed to attend the service, lest the absence of a congregation should testify the feeling that prevailed.

The demand which the emperor first made was, that all should submit to the decisions of the council of Trent. The Roman-catholic states were, of course, sufficiently ready to make this engagement; and several of the protestant princes—Maurice, the elector Palatine, and the elector of Brandenburg—from whom better things might have been hoped, were induced to concur in it. Some however even in these circumstances were found to hold fast their integrity: and with the *cities* the emperor was reduced to practise an extraordinary artifice. They drew up a memorial of the conditions on which they were willing to submit to the council, comprising some of the principal stipulations for which the protestants had ever contended. When the paper was presented to him, he affected, without ever looking at it, to consider it as a declaration of unreserved submission, and thanked them for their compliance with his wishes.

But on the subject of the council difficulties arose which the emperor had not anticipated. Scarcely had Charles's successes against the protestants commenced, when the pope became sensible of the danger to which he should be exposed, if the emperor became absolute master in Germany. At the earliest period therefore that the engagements into which he had entered would allow, he withdrew his quota of troops from the imperial army, and even began to project an alliance with the king of France.¹ No longer daring to trust a council assembled at Trent, where it would be exposed to the emperor's influence, he translated it to Bologna, where he might hope to have it under his own control: but, as this removal must destroy all expectation of the council's being acknowledged by the Germans, it was strenuously opposed by the emperor and other princes; which

¹ The emperor was seasonably relieved from danger from this quarter, by the death of his old rival Francis I, March 31, 1547: Henry VIII. of England had died two months before.

produced a schism in the council itself, such of the fathers as were under the emperor's influence pertinaciously remaining at Trent, while the rest departed to Bologna. Much altercation ensued, which issued in an indefinite adjournment of the assembly: nor were any means found of adjusting the difference, and bringing the council again into action, till more than four years after, when Julius III. had succeeded Paul III. in the papal chair, and the season of enforcing its decrees was past.

Thus disappointed in his views from this quarter, Charles, for the purpose of establishing peace and uniformity in religion throughout Germany, resolved on a measure which as much astonished the devoted Romanists, as it proved oppressive to the protestants. This was no other than bringing forward to be sanctioned by the diet, and thus enforced in the empire, a scheme of religion well known by the name of the *Interim*—from its being proposed to be continued in force only till the decision of a satisfactory general council could be had. The persons whom Charles employed to draw up this formulary were Pflug, bishop of Naumburg, Heldingus, made the year following bishop of Mersburg, and Agricola Islebius; the two former Romanists of some moderation, and the latter little better than an apostate Lutheran.¹ The work was such as might be expected from its authors. "Its contents," says Thuanus, "were agreeable to the hitherto received doctrine of the Roman-catholic church, except that it did not utterly condemn the marriage of priests, or entirely reject communion in both kinds." It was drawn up however very much upon the plan of the book submitted seven years before to the diet of Ratisbon, and of Gropper's scheme of reformation for Cologne;² and

¹ "Suspected not without reason," says Robertson, "of having been gained by bribes and promises, to betray or mislead his party on this occasion."

² Above, p. 121, 167.

consequently was "expressed, for the most part, in the softest words, or in scriptural phrases, or in terms of studied ambiguity."

Before it was publicly brought forward, the Interim was submitted to the examination of select persons. Bucer, being sent for from Strasburg by the elector of Brandenburg, who now "made it his study to please the emperor,"¹ was pressed both by him and Granvelle, the emperor's chief minister, to subscribe it; and, on his refusing to do so, it was not without danger of his life that he made his escape, and returned home. A copy of the work was also sent to Rome, where a great outcry was made against the emperor's presumption in adventuring to meddle with such subjects, as well as against some things contained in the book. The aged pope, however, more sagacious from long experience in affairs, only wondered that Charles could be so elated by one victory, as to imagine that he could dictate the faith of both parties; predicted, that "what all would impugn and none defend" must soon fall; and in the mean time, with consummate artifice, affecting to believe that Charles, as a secular prince, was not pretending to prescribe articles to the faithful, to which they were to lower down their belief, but only to the heretics articles to which they must rise in order to be tolerated, he urged an explicit declaration to that effect. With regard to the two points of the marriage of priests and the giving of the cup to the laity, he observed, that it belonged only to himself to grant dispensations to

¹ We trace with pain the declension, if not even defection, of Joachim elector of Brandenburg: and our pain is not alleviated by discovering that there were interested motives which might lead to it. He sought to have his son admitted, under the sanction of the emperor and the pope, to the archbishopric of Magdeburg, to which he had been elected by the chapter. How great is the danger arising from "loving this present world!" How great also the folly of so doing! The elector succeeded in the object of his ambition—but his son scarcely survived his full admission to his new dignity!

that effect; that, "if the emperor took upon him to allow them as lawful, he would grievously offend Almighty God; but that, holding them unlawful, he might yet permit them to the heretics as the less of two evils."¹

The emperor, having consulted with the ecclesiastical electors, corrected the book as he judged fit, and proposed it in the diet, March 15, 1548; when, either by previous concert with the emperor, or of his own instance, the archbishop of Mentz, the premier elector, rising up, immediately after it had been read, and before any of the members had the opportunity of expressing their sentiments upon it, returned thanks to the emperor, in the name of the diet, for his paternal and provident care for them in the important matter of religion and the peace of the empire. Every one was astonished, but no one ventured to express his surprise: to so servile a state were the princes of Germany reduced! and the emperor, affecting to consider the archbishop's address as the ratification of the diet, closed the business, and enrolled the Interim among the solemn decrees of the empire.

The Interim met with the fate it deserved, and which might have been anticipated. "It was rather rejected by all," says F. Paul, "than accepted by any: and that did follow, which doth ordinarily happen to him that would unite contrary opinions—he maketh both parties agree to impugn his sentiments, and each man obstinate in maintaining his own."

The emperor however spared no pains to procure or enforce an external compliance with it. Among the protestant princes, we regret to state that Joachim of Brandenburg, and Frederic elector Palatine made no scruple of receiving it. Ulric of Würtemberg, also, whose country was filled with Spanish garrisons, acquiesced in it. Maurice of Saxony, contrary to

¹ Father Paul.

what is frequently stated, never gave an unconditional assent to the Interim, nor ever established it in his country. He told the emperor that he could not do it, consistently with his express engagements to his subjects; and he pleaded Charles's own promises relative to religion. Immediately after it had passed the diet he left Augsburg, and called an assembly of his states to communicate to them what had taken place, and to consider how far they could concur in it. After repeated meetings, wherein the question of submission to authority in things indifferent, which subsequently produced very serious controversies, was first moved, a form of religion for his territories was agreed upon at Leipzig.¹—There were not wanting however princes who, though possessed of very inferior power, made a manly and honourable stand against the emperor's impositions. Among these John Marquis of Brandenburg-Anspach,² brother to the elector, and Wolfgang duke of Deuxponts, of the Palatine family, are distinguished.—The successful firmness of count Henneberg has been before related.—John of Brandenburg partly from resentment at the treatment which Henry of Brunswick, his father-in-law, had met with from the protestants, had joined the emperor in the war. He now pleaded with him his services; the reliance he had placed on Charles's promises concerning religion; the informality of the decree establishing the Interim;

¹ Dr. Robertson has here given currency to a very erroneous statement of Maurice's conduct on the subject of religion. He says, "As he knew Charles to be inflexible with regard to the submission which he required to the Interim, he did not hesitate one moment whether he should establish that form of doctrine and worship in his dominions." And he makes the assembly of the states of Saxony, at Leipzig, to be held for the purpose simply of "laying the Interim before them, together with the reasons which made it necessary to conform to it," and thus "rendering their obedience a voluntary deed of their own." In the same paragraph he also very injuriously misrepresents the conduct of Melancthon, who, as we shall see, while he concurred in the formulary of Leipzig, would hold no terms with the Interim.

² Above, p. 116.

and his inability conscientiously to comply with it: and so pertinaciously did he adhere to these points, that the emperor, seeing he was not to be wrought upon, bid him begone from Augsburg, fearing that he would influence others also. He accordingly departed immediately, and made no alteration of religion within his territories.—The duke of Deuxponts, being frequently pressed upon the subject, frankly told the emperor, “That he had hitherto known no religion but that in which he was brought up; that he had examined it, and was convinced of its accordance with the word of God; that he should wound his conscience, and risk the safety of his soul, if he consented to all parts of the Interim: that the same was the opinion of his divines; and that he could not think of compelling them to go contrary to their consciences.” Here too a bold and faithful avowal of principle was crowned with success, and no further engagement appears to have been exacted of the duke, than that he would conform as far as he conscientiously could.—The sons and the subjects of the landgrave of Hesse appear also to have successfully refused the Interim.

But it was in the case of the free cities that the emperor’s tyranny was especially exerted. In them the doctrines of the reformation had taken the deepest root. In them also, by the constitution of their government, principles of liberty, obnoxious to one who aspired at absolute monarchy, were most prevalent. Could they have united their counsels and their resources, they might have made their wishes to be respected: but their dispersed situation rendered this impracticable, and Charles determined to put down opposition in each of them separately, before combination could be attempted among them. Hence Augsburg, Ulm, Halle in Suabia, with Strasburg, Constance, and other cities, suffered great oppression. In Augsburg, being master of every thing, he abolished the existing form of government;

dissolved all the corporations and fraternities; and displaced the magistrates, substituting for them creatures of his own, each of whom was sworn to observe the Interim. He next proceeded to Ulm, and, besides effecting like changes there, carried off in chains Martin Frecht, and such others of the ministers as refused to comply with his enactments. These examples produced their effect in procuring the submission of the neighbouring cities; in consequence of which most of the protestant ministers were compelled to quit their stations. Suabia, which was occupied in every part by Spanish troops, suffered most severely. "We hear," says Melancthon, "of dreadful devastation in some of the churches. In Suabia and on the Rhine more than four hundred pastors have been expelled, and some of them murdered. Every species of violence is committed. The churches are shut up, and there is no one left even to baptize the children. At Tübingen (in Würtemberg) all the pastors and preachers are driven away, and only one priest left; who, in compliance with the directions of the Interim, has restored the mass. Such is the *golden age* which Agricola and his coadjutors promised us!" "The city of Ratisbon entreated the emperor that their church might not be disturbed. He answered by expelling in one day seven ministers of the gospel, and closing the sacred edifices."

Strasburg, which had been under the necessity of submitting to the emperor's authority one month only before the battle of Muhlberg, now distinguished itself by a noble, and not altogether unsuccessful opposition to his dictates on the subject of religion. The senate pleaded against the reception of the Interim, in a manner which ought to have commended itself at once to the understanding and the heart of every reasonable being. They urged that they desired nothing so much as to gratify the emperor, but that to comply in this instance would be to

do violence to their consciences, to offend Almighty God, and to endanger their salvation. They entreated him therefore that he would not, in a case which concerned not lands and goods, or any earthly matter, but their everlasting well-being, compel them "to say with their mouths what their hearts did not think;" that this was contrary to all the hopes which he himself had held out to them, and to the constant reference, which had been made by all preceding diets, of such questions to a general and free council.

How just and striking is the description here given, in few words, of the only object which persecution can ever hope to accomplish—to make men "say with their mouths what their hearts do not think." How infatuated the mind which can pursue so worthless an object at such a cost! And how detestably cruel and diabolical to exact this of our fellow-men, in despite of all the arguments and entreaties they can use, when to their own apprehension, at least, their "everlasting welfare" depends upon their refusal; and when no rational being, however strong his own persuasion on the other side may be, can ever imagine it possible, that their salvation should be promoted by such a constrained and merely external compliance as he can exact.

Still however the heartless trampler on all rights, human and divine, had no other answer to return to this forcible appeal of the senate of Strasburg, than this, "That they must comply or take the consequences." But they were not to be silenced: they persevered in entreaty and expostulation, till at length the emperor told them they might settle the affair with their bishop: and with him, after immense difficulty, they did so far succeed as to establish a compromise, by which they ceded three of their churches, and retained the rest, with their own ministers to officiate in them.—It was in the midst of these struggles at Strasburg that Bucer and Paul

Fagius retired from the scene, and accepted the invitation which Cranmer had given them to remove into England.

The city of Constance was less fortunate. It had never yet made its peace with the emperor for the part it had taken in the late contest. When therefore its senate pleaded, in the same way with that of Strasburg, against the Interim, he despatched a body of Spanish troops to surprise the city: but, these having failed in the attempt, he put the place to the ban of the empire, and not only reduced it to receive the Interim, but deprived it of its privileges as a free city, and subjected it henceforward to the house of Austria. Its ministers were compelled to quit the place.

The reflections of Melancthon and his friends, in the midst of these scenes, are such as we might have expected from their piety and wisdom. "The dangers of the church," says that excellent man, in a letter in which he notices the death of his valued friend Cruciger on the 1st of December, 1548, "are such that we evidently cannot be saved by human intervention. Indeed all human protection is withdrawn. Nothing remains for us but a pious confession of the truth by individuals, and earnest prayers to Almighty God."

The scenes which we have been reviewing are melancholy: and the face of Germany was, no doubt, for the present changed for the worse by the event of the war; yet still the change would be greater in appearance than in reality. The deposition of John Frederic, indeed, and the substitution of such a prince as Maurice in his place, was a serious loss to the cause of true religion: and it is grievous to find in the tergiversation, or the temporizing policy of Joachim of Brandenburg, Frederic elector Palatine, and others, that the best days of religion among persons of that rank in Germany were past. Yet still

we may feel assured, that, as previously more religion would appear on the page of history than really existed, so now more would exist than openly appeared. While no great sacrifices were actually to be made, and the temporal privileges of princes were asserted in contending for their religious ones, many were ready to take that side, who failed, or even proved themselves unsound, in the day of trial. We have seen also, in repeated instances, what heavy complaints the pious reformers made of the inconsistent conduct of numbers who professed the protestant faith.¹ No doubt the church needed to be sifted and purified. As our own archbishop Cranmer remarked on this very occasion for the warning of his countrymen: "In Germany, although the gospel had shed its glorious light, yet a large proportion of such as were within reach of its beams had refused to reform their lives according to its direction. Hence, it is said, have these unrepenting converts been delivered over to imperial and papal oppression." Still however there were found persons, even in the highest class of society, who stood firm, and made a faithful protest. Whole senates contended for the truth, and numerous pious ministers and others patiently suffered for it: and, even where corrupt doctrines and superstitious rites were publicly enforced, the sentiments of the people remained unaltered. The rending asunder of the endeared connexion between faithful pastors and their flocks, wherever it took place, was a mournful event: yet thousands, thus deprived of public ordinances in which they could conscien-

¹ Let the insults, which Roman catholics never cease to offer to protestants on this ground, be checked by the testimony of one of their own party. The bishop of Alifi, preaching before the council of Trent in its twenty-third session, "spoke of the faith and manners of the heretics and catholics, and said, that, 'as the faith of the catholics was better, so *the heretics did exceed them in good life*;' which did give much distaste, especially to those who remembered the saying of our Saviour and of S. James, that faith is not shewed but by works." —F. Paul.

tiously join, would worship God, even with increased devoutness, in private. "The Lord knoweth them that are his," although the histories of the church no longer notice them. Such persons, in these troublous times, would "speak often one to another;" and "a book of remembrance would be written before him" in their favour: and for their sakes, we may conclude, was that happy revolution vouchsafed, (as surprising as any on record,) which we shall have to relate in the next chapter. "The rod of the wicked shall not *rest* on the lot of the righteous," so as to cause them to be "tempted above that they are able;" but "with every temptation a way to escape" shall be provided for them, "that they may be able to bear it."

After settling in this manner the affairs of Germany, the emperor proceeded, in the autumn of the year 1548, to visit his hereditary dominions in the Netherlands; to receive there his son Philip from Spain; and to introduce the young prince to the homage of his future subjects. Here he was labouring, though happily his efforts were defeated, to establish the inquisition: and, on quitting the country in the following spring, he left behind him a most detestable persecuting edict, which was immediately published in both the Flemish and the French language. Happily it was found that this edict, if carried into effect, would prove ruinous to the interests of a trading country: and on this ground chiefly, or even solely, it was for that time superseded by Mary of Austria, the emperor's sister, who governed the country in his name; and afterwards, on her representation, it was somewhat moderated by Charles himself.¹ It may be remembered however to our comfort, that this very period of the threatened suppression of protes-

¹ Father Paul states, that in the Low Countries, "from the first edict of Charles V." to the peace of 1558, "there were hanged, beheaded, buried alive, and burned, to the number of 50,000," for their religion.

tantism on the continent was that of its triumph, under Edward VI, in England.

But the reader will naturally desire to learn, what, amid these changing and turbulent scenes, were the conduct and fate of Melancthon—the most interesting character, after Luther was removed, that Germany could boast. What were his feelings at the commencement of the war has been already shewn from his private correspondence. When the war was carried into Saxony by Maurice's invasion of that country, in the autumn of 1546, the university of Wittemberg was dispersed; and Melancthon, in common with many other learned and pious men, was driven out to seek a retreat where he might be able to find it. Zerbst, in the principality of Anhalt, was the place at which he chiefly passed his time, under the anxious protection of the princes of that house: but, as soon as the war was terminated, he embraced the earliest opportunity of returning to Wittemberg; and preferred continuing there to either accepting the offers made him by Maurice of an advantageous settlement in the university of Leipzig, or joining the new establishment of the sons of John Frederic at Jena. Maurice sent for Melancthon, Bugenhagen, and Cruciger, treated them with kindness, and committed to them the administration of the affairs both of the church and the university; assigned them salaries; and desired them to proceed as they had been accustomed to do.

On such conditions they thankfully accepted his proposals: and to some who objected to their conduct, Melancthon replied, “I have come hither, not to join the party of our enemies, but to succour a mourning church.”

In every thing that concerned religion Melancthon was consulted by Maurice. In the year 1548, that prince held no less than eight conventions of his states on the subject, and three in the year following; at all of which, except the first, and a private meet-

ing of the princes where certain articles were sanctioned, Melancthon was present, and drew up most of the papers which were adopted or considered in them. He incurred, it is true, much censure for the concessions here made; and, from the manner in which his conduct is generally spoken of, it would be inferred, that he had been induced actually to countenance the Interim.¹ But so far was this from being the case, that I should rather affirm his opposition to that formulary to have been heroic, both when it was previously submitted to his examination, and after it was adopted and published by authority. To this the numerous papers relative to it, written by him in conjunction with his colleagues, bear ample testimony. Of these papers some are private, for his own use; some, letters to friends, or to learned and religious bodies; some, formal memorials to Maurice and his ministers, and other persons in authority: some are in his own name alone, and some are signed jointly by him and one or more of his friends and coadjutors, Bugenhagen, Cruciger, Major, Pfessinger, and Froschelius: some are brief, while others follow the Interim from article to article, passing the just censure upon each. A spirit of combined firmness and moderation pervades them. They avow a readiness, on the part of those whose signatures they bear, to concur in anything tolerable, where ritual matters only were concerned, and advise the elector not to make a stand on some things which it might yet have been wished had been different: but on all the great points at issue—on justification, on the invocation of saints, on the necessity of the particular confession of sins to man in order to the pardon of them by God, on the sacrifice of the mass, private masses, and masses for the dead—on all these and other topics they declare that the writers

¹ See Robertson, iv. 14, 15. The reference to this passage is thus made in Robertson's Index, under the name *Melancthon*:—"Is prevailed on to favour the Interim!" See above note, p. 279.

can never acquiesce in what the book prescribes ; and that they will suffer banishment, imprisonment, or death, rather than ever consent to do it. From the first, Melancthon denounced the idea of establishing such a formulary by law, as " an infatuated project," which would multiply, instead of healing divisions ; nay, would fill the country with insurrections and tumults : the very stones, he said, would cry out against it ; it would disgrace the German churches in the eyes of all the world ; and could never be supported but by manifest tyranny, and unrelenting persecution. He implores Almighty God, therefore, that such pernicious counsels might never be adopted. In short, his opposition to it was so loud and vehement that the emperor, regarding him as the most formidable individual adversary that he had to encounter, ordered him to be seized, and delivered up to him, as " an enemy of the public peace." He was screened however by Maurice, who appears to have secreted him for some time in a monastery at Zell on the Muldaw, as the elector Frederic had done Luther in the castle of Wartburg. But, as far as his own private dangers were concerned, Melancthon was unmoved amid the storm. " If I am called upon to answer," he writes to Camerarius, " though I find that the emperor is enraged against me, I shall simply say, that I cannot assent to such delusions. And I *will* not assent to them . . . I will do to the end as I have hitherto done. Wherever I go I will express the same sentiments : I will aim to carry about with me a heart lifted up to God ; and I will yet retain my wonted moderation, and avoid exciting seditions." The closing sentence will be better understood, when it has been seen how the writer was assailed by men of his own party, for whom he did not go far enough, as well as by those of the opposite party, for whom he went much too far.

But the point on which Melancthon especially gave dissatisfaction and offence to many of his brethren

(who afterwards affected the name of *genuine* Lutherans,) was, his maintaining, that in things purely indifferent it was lawful, even in matters of religion, to submit to the commands of an earthly superior. The difficulties attending this position, and the abuse to which it may be liable, from the latitude with which the term *indifferent* may be interpreted, are obvious: they gave rise at this time to a fierce controversy in Germany, characterised by the appellation *adiaphoristic*, or *indifferential*. The spirit manifested by Melancthon's opponents will now be universally condemned. "Rather than yield submission," exclaimed Flacius of Magdeburg, "we ought to see the churches desolated, and to terrify our rulers with the dread of insurrections." With a great majority of readers the question of interest will relate, rather to the extent to which Melancthon carried his concessions under the name of conformity in things indifferent, than to the principle itself which he thus admitted. The current representation, or rather misrepresentation, of modern writers may be given in the words of Dr. Robertson: "Many of the protestant ecclesiastics, whom Maurice consulted, proceeded to class among the number of things indifferent, several doctrines, which Luther had pointed out as gross and pernicious errors in the Romish creed; and, placing in the same rank many of those rites which distinguished the reformed from the popish worship, they exhorted their people to comply with the emperor's injunctions concerning these particulars."

The representations of Mosheim particularly as exaggerated in the translation and notes of Maclaine, are still more grossly injurious. "The natural temper of Melancthon was soft and flexible; his love of peace, almost excessive; and his apprehensions of the displeasure and resentment of men in power were such as betrayed a pusillanimous spirit.¹ . . . His

¹ Dr. Mosheim has elsewhere spoken of Melancthon in much more just and worthy terms. "His humane and gentle spirit was apt to

sentiments on some points of no inconsiderable moment were entirely different from those of Luther. . . . The ideas of the latter concerning faith as the only cause of salvation, concerning the necessity of good works to our final happiness," &c. were among those on which Melancthon differed from him. Again: Though Melancthon "did not entirely conceal his sentiments during the life of Luther, he delivered them, nevertheless, with great circumspection and modesty, yielding always to the authority of his colleague, for whom he had a sincere friendship, and of whom also he stood in awe. But no sooner were the eyes of Luther closed, than he inculcated, with the greatest plainness and freedom, what he had before only hinted at with timorousness and caution." MacLaine makes his author to add, that, "by the counsel and influence of Melancthon every thing relating to the Interim had been conducted."¹—Yet further: "In the class of matters indifferent, this great man and his associates placed many things which had appeared of the highest importance to Luther. . . . For he regarded as such the doctrine of justification by faith alone; the necessity of good works to eternal salvation; the number of the sacraments," &c.²

sink into a kind of yielding softness under the influence of mild and generous treatment. And, accordingly, while his adversaries soothed him with fair words and flattering promises, he seemed to melt as they spoke, and in some measure to comply with their demands; but, when they so far forgot themselves as to make use of imperious language and menacing terms, then did Melancthon appear in a very different point of light; then a spirit of intrepidity, ardour, and independence animated all his words and actions, and he looked down with contempt on the threats of power, the favours of fortune, and the fear of death. The truth is, that, in this great and good man, a soft and yielding temper was joined with the most inviolable fidelity, and the most invincible attachment to the truth."

¹ I had formed conjectures as to the sense in which this could, by any possibility be meant: but they are superfluous: for Mosheim here makes no mention of the Interim! The words are inserted by the translator, who in the other passages goes (as he very frequently does,) beyond the original.

² Calvin along with others was drawn in to censure Melancthon as

The great injustice of these charges may be inferred from what has been already stated. The minute investigation of the subject (for which the reader must be referred to another place,¹) would more fully establish the fact. But here our proofs must necessarily be brief. The article of the Interim concerning justification, Melancthon and his friends affirmed, subverted the very foundations of true doctrine. It taught, "that faith is only our preparation for justification: that love follows, and by *it* a man is (made) righteous," or justified. "This," say they, "is all one with making us righteous for the sake of our own works and virtues: and thus the light of the true doctrine, that a man is accounted righteous, and accepted of God, only for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, by faith, is extinguished, and the darkness and errors of past ages are introduced again." "St. Paul's words, 'We are justified by faith,' are here made to mean, By faith we are *prepared* to receive *somewhat else* whereby we are justified. Thus is a man led away from Christ, to reliance on himself, and deprived of the consolation provided for him in the Son of God." They readily admit, indeed, that penitence, love, and other graces must coëxist with faith, and obedience follow in the justified man, yet not these things but his faith in Christ, or reliance on him alone, justifies him. "It is no strife of words, therefore," they contend, "to say, that *by faith ONLY* we are justified. Other virtues must be in us, but we place not our confidence in them, (for they are all weak and imperfect,) but only in the Son of God."

The necessity of this doctrine they feelingly and beautifully trace out. "This is the immutable truth

to the particulars which he admitted into the list of "things indifferent;" but it is clear that he did it chiefly on the report of others, and Beza tells us, Calvin afterwards found that he had been misinformed. Indeed his own principles and practice appear to have differed little from those of Melancthon upon this subject. See Continuation of Milner, ii. p. 49, 50, and iii. p. 353, 354, 392—395.

¹ Continuation of Milner, ii. p. 48—71, and preface, p. xv—xvii.

of the gospel, plain and easy to be understood, and necessary to be kept constantly in view in all our attempts to approach unto God. When you pray, it will not prove sufficient for you to look into yourself, and require the existence of love and other virtues; (though they must exist there;) but, besides these feeble and imperfect graces, we must possess this true consolation, namely an affiance in the Mediator, and a belief that God is assuredly ready to accept us, and to hear our cries and groans, and not to reject us. And this confidence must be rested on the Son of God, and not on our own holiness and Christian graces. All our virtues in this life are weak and imperfect, and much evil and corruption remain in our hearts. We must needs therefore fly to the Mediator, lay hold on him, and seek grace and mercy through him.—We are filled with horror at the view of the greatness of our own sins and miseries, and therefore are compelled, when we would find peace of mind, to fly to the one only Propitiator, whom God in infinite mercy and wisdom hath proposed to us: and then, as the apostle testifies, ‘Being justified by faith we have peace with God.’”

And this doctrine, they affirm, “had not at any time been wholly lost; though the devil, from the very time of Adam’s fall and recovery, had never relaxed his efforts to suppress it. Even when most obscured, it was yet to be traced in the experience, the spiritual exercises, of all pious humble minds. In the protestant churches it was now so thoroughly known and received, that the errors of the Interim would be readily detected, and scarcely an individual would be found to listen to that work.”

The rejection of the true doctrine by those who compiled the Interim is traced, in great measure, to their erroneous views of the nature of faith. They understood by it nothing more than a mere historical assent. Hence they maintained that faith might exist without love, and in persons who were living

in sin; and "that this is still no less faith, if only it acknowledge right doctrine." And hence again, in manifest contradiction to the scriptures, they scarcely reckoned faith among the graces of the Spirit at all.

The passages which speak the determination of the writer and his friends to adhere to the truth, and to reject so insidious a work as the Interim, by whatever power imposed, are numerous and striking. "To renounce the truth of the gospel, after having clearly known it, and to join ourselves with those who persecute it, would amount to the unpardonable sin: in which may God mercifully prevent our ever involving ourselves! And, though wars and desolation be threatened in case we refuse, we ought to make more account of the commandment of God than of all such evils." "As no creature either in heaven or earth can change the wondrous counsel of God revealed in the gospel, so, by his help, we will still set forth the same doctrine concerning faith and good works, which we have taught in these churches for many years past: for it is most clearly revealed in the holy scriptures, divinely vouchsafed unto us." "Our sentiments being asked, we cannot but deliver them unequivocally, though we would do it with the meekness and moderation which become Christians: and, for the dangers which we may incur by so doing, we will commend ourselves to the almighty and eternal God, the Father of our Redeemer and Saviour, Jesus Christ."—Writing singly, Melancthon says, "Never will I burden my conscience by sanctioning this book." "I will by no means give my assent to it, though I know there are those who thirst for my blood. But I support myself with the hope of divine protection, and the comfort of a good conscience."

We find also, in the wishes and proposals of Melancthon and his friends at this time, much of that detachment from worldly and political views, which characterized the early days of the reformation.

They were willing that the protestant princes should act according to their own judgment of things, and leave their divines to follow their consciences, and to take the consequences. Thus they jointly write to Maurice: "The government will consider, and determine for itself, what it can and ought to do for the protection of the churches. For ourselves, as individuals, we are prepared, God being our helper, for exile or whatever other punishment may follow." And thus to the divines of Strasburg: "To all who have asked advice of us, we have written uniformly, that we would recommend the pastors of the churches to keep their deliberations quite detached from those of the political governors, and to answer plainly and distinctly, that they will not change their doctrine, or receive the new formulary—it being our part, as divines, to detect and guard against every corruption of doctrine. But let the civil rulers, of whom many are ignorant of Christian truth, and others dislike it, return the emperor such answers as they think proper. Thus the pastors deliver their own consciences, less change is made in the churches, we avoid every thing that can be deemed seditious or violent, and we retain our confession of faith.—The most upright ministers of the gospel incur unknown odium, when once they attempt to exercise political power. It belongs not to our ministry."—To the same purport Melancthon wrote to Schnepfius of Tübingen, and to Matthias Luther syndic of Nordhausen: and thus to another friend, in the year 1549: "Many exclaim that peace is to be preferred before our doubtful disputations. But, where it is evident that some doctrines are corrupted and others obscured, I will never burden my conscience by concurrence. Let others arrange the affairs of kingdoms, and of the church, as they will or as they can, (Christ says, 'My kingdom is not of this world,') I will still speak my sentiments, though with moderation, wherever I may be.—If you may be allowed, without expressly

approving the Interim, to preach the gospel as you have hitherto done, and are not required to change the administration of the Lord's supper, then your conscience is not burdened, though your rulers may sanction the book."

We will now offer some illustration of that "moderation" of Melancthon, which exposed him to censure, and of the manner in which he limited his concessions concerning things "indifferent."

Addressing Maurice at Augsburg before the Interim had passed the diet, he says jointly with his friends: "Though it may already sufficiently appear what we admit, and what we are constrained utterly to condemn in this book, yet, that all may perceive how anxious we are for peace and agreement, we will briefly recapitulate the substance of our statements. The blessed doctrine of faith we neither may nor can change, nor will we sanction false worship in the churches. We agree to observe the ceremonies ordained pro tempore—the lessons, the hymns, the use of vestments and other ancient and becoming rites; as also the holidays, (or festivals,) and the regulations subservient to discipline and useful exercises." They lay it down however that nothing, which could be considered as "a species of worship," was ever to be introduced without the express sanction of the word of God: and on this ground they reject various popish services which they specify. To the objection that, when changes were once admitted, it was impossible to say how far they would be carried; and that "it was scandalous to encourage their enemies by such an appearance of yielding;" he replies, that they had "sufficiently defined the things in which they could concede; and that submission in such things, made for the sake of retaining the essential truth of the gospel, was more becoming than proudly to throw up their situations, to desert the churches, and to give occasion to the people to say, that by obstinacy in trifles their ministers had

exposed them to the horrors of a military occupation of their country." When it was further objected, that such a submission was a surrender of Christian liberty, he answered, That Christian liberty related to far higher things; and he lamented that men set a value on the unrestrained gratification of their own wills, which savoured little of Christian humility. "The kingdom of God," he says, "consists in true faith, prayer, hope, love, patience, purity, righteousness; and, without these inward graces, external liberty in meats, and vestments, and other things of that kind, is not Christian liberty, but a new kind of civil polity, only more agreeable to the people, because it lays them under fewer restraints. We ought the more meekly to bear a degree of servitude, provided it involve nothing contrary to piety, because we have certainly abused the plea of liberty."

But Melancthon's letter to the pastors of Hamburg, who, he observes, were further removed from the scene of danger, and on that account perhaps the more ready to censure his concessions, will give us the best view of the case—of the situation of the Saxon churches, of the nature of the concessions made, and of the Christian meekness with which Melancthon defended his own conduct respecting them. We shall therefore conclude our present subject by laying a considerable part of this letter before the reader. It is dated April 16, 1549, and signed jointly by Bugenhagen and Melancthon.

"Reverend and dear friends—We feel not at all hurt by your lovingly admonishing and even reproving us; for these are necessary duties of friendship, especially in the church of Christ. We only desire that, in forming a judgment becoming your prudence, your character, and your kindness for us, you would take a candid view of our conduct, and not hastily condemn old friends, who for more than twenty years have sustained great labours and conflicts in the sacred cause of religion..... First, allow us to

inform you, that, through the goodness of God, the same doctrine is still heard in our churches and schools as we have for so many years professed in common with you. And, as we are assured that it is the eternal truth of God, and the constant doctrine of his real church, it is our determination never in any point to change it. For this very object of preserving our doctrine and worship unaltered, we have had sharp conflicts to maintain, during the present year, with persons of great talents, and high consideration in our country. These, we trust, are no ambiguous testimonies of our steadfastness, seeing we incur, for the sake of our principles, odium and danger with which they are little acquainted, who, living at ease, and surrounded with their admirers, heap reproaches upon us. We wish such persons could be present at our discussions, and hear the subtle arguments which we have to encounter.—The same books are promulgated among us as before the war: nor are other rites observed in our churches than you yourselves have witnessed. In these, though there is not an entire uniformity, more being used in some places and fewer in others, yet there is no such difference as to cause any contention among us. You agree with us, that religious assemblies must be held, decent rites used in them, and some sort of discipline observed: in which things, if nothing be introduced contrary to any commandment of God, the particulars are not worth contending about. This you admit: but you are afraid of danger lurking under the term, *things indifferent*. Our sentiments are the same as your own, when you look to this point with an eye of jealousy; and we are sensible that many wish to give things a turn towards the whole popish polity: but yet, when, occupied in an arduous conflict for essentials, we abstain from contending about things indifferent, we think that good and wise men should put a favourable construction on our conduct. We do not apply the term *indifferent* to magical consecra-

tions, to the worship of images, to the carrying about of the host, and other things of that kind: these we utterly condemn, both with our tongues and our pens. We do not even extend the name to silly trifling ceremonies, such as watchings at the graves of the deceased. Persons who make such charges against us do us injustice, and indulge their own wrong tempers. But there are many things, distinct from these, observed by the church from the earliest ages, and conducive to good order, or even to edification; such as festivals, a course of lessons, religious assemblies, examination and absolution before the sacrament, and in order to confirmation, observances connected with public penance and with ordination, solemn vows and prayers at marriages, and decent processions and addresses at funerals. When things of this sort were in use among us, having been retained for beneficial purposes, how could we pretend to say that we would admit nothing of an *indifferent* nature—nothing that was established by custom? Should we, in the spirit of party zeal and hatred, reject the usages of our adversaries, even when they were such as the church of God has ever adopted, even from the primitive times?... We know that your sentiments are remote from this.—But your censure of us relates not to this becoming conformity of our church to the ancients, but rather to certain foolish rites, revived by some persons in power, with a view to the ultimate restoration of all the papal abuses. Here we are blamed for not offering a more determined resistance, and for even advising the pastors, in some instances, not to abandon their churches on account of these impositions.—Take the following instance: In the territories of the marquis Albert of Brandenburg, the court at first required that the pastors should receive and conform to the whole Interim. To this the nobles, the citizens, and the pastors, with a pious union of counsels, respectfully but firmly refused their concurrence. The court then adopted another course,

and proposed articles which made no change either in doctrine or in the public prayers, but only imposed additional rites, and those of a kind which might be borne. Such persons as would not submit to this regulation were ordered to quit the country: and, when many pastors chose the latter alternative, the churches entreated that they might not be deserted. Now what advice was to be given in such a case? Some answer, That the court ought to have been overawed with the threats of insurrection, and thus deterred from making any changes. But many reasons induced us not to give such advice. Our enemies, who will not allow *us* to prescribe laws, might only have been provoked to harsher measures: they might have called in the emperor's armies, alleging that such a tone of defiance sounded the trumpet of war throughout the country. Nor could we be willing to see the poor people deprived of their pastors, as has been the case in Suabia, where many of the churches are left entirely destitute, or wolves preside in them, and introduce impious doctrine and false worship. If in such circumstances you disapprove the advice we have given, yet regard us with forbearance, and do not condemn men who teach the same gospel with yourselves, are placed nearer the scene of danger than you are, and, could, in a personal interview, assign to you many reasons in justification of the course they pursue. . . . To shew therefore that we are not moved by the mere desire of liberty, or by the love of novelty, or by hatred for our opponents, we contend for points of importance, with respect to which the better class even of our adversaries cannot shut their eyes against the light of truth. And this we think a more useful course than to quarrel about a surplice, and give occasion to men to say, that we oppose our rulers, raise discords, and expose our country to the ravages of foreign troops, by our folly and obstinacy. For occasioning such evils as these, we must have no light

causes to assign. We congratulate you who are placed in different circumstances. But the church has every where, and at all times had some degree of bondage, more gentle or more galling to bear; and you should endeavour to alleviate the severity of that to which we are subjected, and not increase it by condemning us, while we hold fast what is fundamental. Let us therefore preserve harmony and good will amongst ourselves, lest the spirit of prayer be injured in us and among the people; and lest lamentable and mischievous disputes arise on unessential points; such as formerly divided the church concerning the proper time of observing Easter. Let those who enjoy more liberty give thanks to God for it, and use it piously to set forth his truth; and let them take care not to relax the reins of discipline. Let such of us as are under bondage acknowledge that we are chastened of the Lord, and never suffer his genuine worship to be corrupted—according to that which is written, ‘Though all this be come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee.’ We would not have the churches disturbed: . . . but, when new burdens are imposed, we think it should be seriously considered whether they can be borne, or whether the people must be left a prey to wolves—for we would no more have ceremonies admitted which are contrary to piety than you would. We trust our present answer may satisfy you: and our desire is that our harmony may be uninterrupted, and the union of our souls in God be eternal—as the Son of God, when entering upon his sufferings, prayed that the hearts of all his disciples might be one in God. Farewell!”

Will not the reader now concur in the conclusion at which, in common with Dr. Cox, the biographer of Melancthon, (whose sentiments on *such* a subject should have the more weight, as being those of a dissenter,) I have arrived, that the original documents are “amply sufficient to furnish the defence”

of the reformer against the imputations, whether of his contemporary assailants or of modern historians?

In addition to the explicit statement of the writer's sentiments which the above letter conveys, it contains some interesting notices concerning the situation of the churches with which he was connected. It appears that up to the date of the letter, when the Interim had been in force nearly a year, no material changes had taken place in the Saxon churches. The same doctrines, it is affirmed, were preached, and divine ordinances administered in the same manner. Others of Melancthon's letters and papers carry down the like information to a later period, and extend it to other places. And within this period the emperor began to relax in his zeal for his new form of doctrine. "He wished," says Camerarius, the friend and biographer of Melancthon, "to have it acknowledged, but he daily more and more connived at the failure of conformity to it, if only his authority were not impeached." We may hence infer, that less change was effected in the Lutheran church by the promulgation of the Interim than is sometimes apprehended.

CHAPTER XXVII.

Proceedings of Maurice—He attacks and surprises the Emperor—Treaty of Passau—Death of Maurice—Peace of Religion—Extracts from Melancthon's Writings—Progress of Reformation—Controversies—Reflections.

ONLY four cities of note now held out against the authority of the emperor. These were Magdeburg, Bremen, Hamburg, and Lubeck ; the first relying on its strength, and the others encouraged by their proximity to the protestant kingdoms of Denmark and Sweden. The resistance of Magdeburg, standing connected with events which changed the whole face of affairs in Germany, demands our particular notice.¹ The ban of proscription had been some time before published against the city, in the same irregular manner as against the elector of Saxony and the landgrave : but, when it added to its other offences that of resolutely refusing the Interim, Charles further proclaimed it a prey to any one who could make himself master of it. Though the citizens in consequence suffered many calamities, they bore them with an undaunted spirit, and met the emperor's proclamations with the most vigorous manifestoes, justifying their own conduct, declaring that they contended only for retaining their ancient liberties,

¹ For the fuller detail of particulars, see Robertson, book x.

and the unmolested exercise of their religion, and that in all other things they were ready to yield the most dutiful submission to the emperor's authority. At length, in the diet held at Augsburg in the year 1550, after Charles's return from the Low Countries, it was resolved to despatch an army against the place, and to besiege it in form; and, on the recommendation of the diet, the conduct of the war was, with the emperor's full approbation, committed to Maurice of Saxony. Maurice's undertaking this service (perhaps procuring his own appointment to it,) was another stroke of that artful and ambitious prince's policy. By successive previous measures calculated to regain the confidence of the protestants, which he had entirely forfeited in the Smalkaldic war, he had done much to risk the emperor's favour, and to excite his jealousy; but now, by his apparent zeal against the citizens of Magdeburg, whose spirit and resolution had gained them the general admiration of the protestant party, he allayed every suspicion, and inspired the emperor with confidence; while he at the same time took a most important step towards the execution of the mighty schemes which he was meditating.

By Charles's late successes, not only the religion but the liberties of Germany were prostrated at his feet, and he had but to advance a little further, in order to make himself and his successors as absolute in that country as he had become in Spain. This could not fail to be most offensive and alarming to the princes of the empire, and to none more so than to Maurice—now become the most powerful among them, and, as such, the most impatient of a state of entire dependence on a superior. He appears also to have been sincerely attached to the protestant religion; and he was personally irritated by the cruel imprisonment of the landgrave, his father-in-law, who by his persuasion had put himself into the emperor's hands. All these motives conspired to make

him seek the overthrow of that despotic power, which he had so essentially contributed to raise. The conduct of the siege of Magdeburg not only blinded the emperor to his designs, but gave him the command of a powerful army, which he made it his business to keep together till his plans were ripe for execution. With this view, though he made a shew of vigour, he allowed the siege to be protracted throughout a whole year; and at the close of it granted the besieged such terms, as both secured their religion, and so much attached them to him as to induce them to elect him their burgrave: and all this he at the same time managed with such dexterity, as to avoid exciting any distrust in the breast of the emperor.

But, before we proceed to the developement of Maurice's designs, we must take some notice of the transactions which took place with reference to the council of Trent.

In consequence of the death of Paul III, and the succession of Julius III, to the papal chair, the emperor had a better prospect of succeeding in his wishes with respect to the restoration of the council. A principal object therefore proposed in the diet opened at Augsburg, July 26, 1550, (which was again overawed by the presence of the imperial troops,) was to procure from its members an explicit acknowledgement of the council, with an engagement to obey its decrees; and, in the mean time, more effectually to provide for the observance of the Interim. But here Maurice acted a part which was to gain him credit again with the protestants. He boldly avowed by his deputies, that he would not acknowledge the council unless all points previously decided in it were reviewed; unless the protestant divines were both fully heard, and allowed to vote in the assembly; and unless the pope renounced his pretensions to preside in it, engaged to submit himself to its decrees, and absolved the bishops from the oath by

which they were bound to him, that they might speak and vote with freedom. Yet, in some way not sufficiently explained, he contrived so to represent this daring proceeding, which alone gave any courage and confidence to the protestants, as still to create no distrust in the emperor's mind. The diet however concluded (in February, 1551,) with a recess, in which the affairs of religion were referred to the council, and all parties were required to send their deputies thither—the emperor engaging to give his safe-conduct to such as demanded it.

The council reassembled at Trent in May, 1551; but all the preparations which the protestant divines, at the instance of the princes, had made for it were of no avail. The ambassadors indeed of Maurice and of the duke of Würtemberg, and the deputies of Strasburg and some other cities associated with it, repaired to Trent, and acted there a firm and manly part: but for the divines no such safe-conduct, as the protestant princes, warned by the case of John Huss, demanded from the council itself, could ever be obtained. Brentius and some other divines from Würtemberg and Strasburg ventured to Trent without it; but they could never procure a hearing: and the legate Crescentio expressed violent indignation at the idea of their being allowed to present a confession to the assembly. Melancthon likewise, by Maurice's command, proceeded on his way as far as Nuremberg, there to await further orders.—But in the mean time Maurice's designs were matured, and his determination was to adopt measures very different from that of sending divines to carry on useless discussions with the haughty representatives of the Roman-catholic church.

By a tissue of the most consummate artifice and duplicity, Maurice, though but a young man, had, for nearly two years, so completely duped Charles, the most practised and wary politician of his age, as to dissipate every suspicion that might have arisen in

his mind, and to inspire him to the last with the most entire confidence; while he actually formed leagues with several German princes, collected troops and kept them ready on the instant to obey his summons, and even entered into an effective alliance with the king of France, for the subversion of all that overgrown power which Charles had established in Germany. The emperor, who at this time laboured under an attack of the gout, was reposing at Inspruck, within three day's journey of Trent, watching the proceedings of the council there, and superintending the progress of a petty war in which he was engaged in Italy; while, with scarcely sufficient troops about him to form his guard, he daily expected a friendly visit from Maurice. Instead of paying him this visit, the latter suddenly sounded the trumpet of war; rushed with a well-appointed army from Thuringia; seized upon Augsburg, from which the imperial garrison fled before him; took by storm the castle of Ehrenberg, which commanded the passes of the mountains; and, but for a sudden mutiny among a part of his troops, would have captured the emperor at Inspruck almost before he was aware of his danger. Charles heard of his approach only late in the evening, and, though unable to bear the motion of any other vehicle than a litter, he was obliged to set out immediately by torch-light, and in the midst of a heavy rain, and to be carried across the mountains to hide himself in the fastnesses of Carinthia; while Maurice arriving a few hours after, and finding his prey escaped, abandoned the baggage of the emperor and his ministers to be plundered by his soldiers. Thus taken unprepared by a foe who would not allow himself for a moment to be trifled with, to whose enterprise almost all Germany wished well, and who was powerfully seconded by the military operations of the French king in another quarter, Charles, now destitute of all hope of again forming such a confederation as he had brought to act for the overthrow

of the Smalkaldic league, was compelled to have recourse to negociation, and in fact to surrender all the great designs which he had so long been maturing, and seemed to have successfully carried into effect, against the liberties, both civil and religious, of Germany. The particulars of what followed must be sought elsewhere. Suffice it for us to say, that Maurice, when he first took up arms, had avowed three objects as those which he aimed to accomplish, namely to secure the protestant religion—to maintain the ancient laws and constitution of the empire—and to procure the liberation of landgrave of Hesse. By the first of these proposals he roused all the favourers of the reformation to support him; by the second he interested all the friends of liberty in his cause; and by the last he engaged on his side all the sympathy which had been universally excited by the landgrave's unhappy situation, and all the indignation raised against the base injustice and cruelty by which he had been betrayed into that situation, and for five years detained in it, after he had fulfilled every condition prescribed, and notwithstanding every intercession that could be made in his behalf. And all these objects Maurice ultimately secured. By the treaty of Passau, concluded August 2, 1552, under the mediation of Ferdinand, the emperor's brother, it was agreed, That on or before the twelfth of that month the landgrave should be set at liberty, and conveyed in safety into his own dominions; that within six months a diet should be held to deliberate on the best means of terminating the existing religious dissensions, and that in the mean time no molestation whatever should be offered to those who adhered to the Confession of Augsburg; that, if the diet, thus to be held, should not be able to effect an amicable adjustment of the religious disputes, the stipulations of the present treaty in behalf of the protestants should continue in full force for ever; and, finally, that the encroachments complained of,

on the constitution and liberties of the empire, should also be referred to the approaching diet.

Thus was laid the basis of the religious liberties of Germany; thus was the fabric of absolute power, of which Charles imagined himself to be laying the top stone, subverted at a stroke; and thus was the protestant church, which had been brought to the verge of extinction, raised again, and placed in safety; and all this, under the controlling influence of divine providence, by the hands of the same man who had been the chief instrument of establishing what he now demolished, and apparently destroying what he now restored. It is remarkable also that the king of France, a zealous Romanist, and a persecutor of the protestants in his own dominions, should have borne a large share in giving permanence and stability to protestantism within the empire; and that a Roman-catholic bishop¹ should have been the negociator of the league between him and Maurice, which proved so fatal to the Romish church. "So wonderfully," observes Dr. Robertson—thus giving utterance to a sentiment which it would shew the grossest insensibility not to form on such an occasion—"So wonderfully doth the wisdom of God superintend and regulate the caprice of human passions, and render them subservient towards the accomplishment of his purposes."

Maurice in the several towns which opened their gates to him in his march, and in all places to which his power even for a time extended, reinstated the magistrates whom the emperor had deposed, and restored the protestant ministers and schoolmasters whom he had ejected. In particular, he did this at Augsburg; and, though the emperor afterwards reversed his other arrangements in that city, he suffered all the ministers except three to remain, to the great joy of the citizens.

¹ John de Feinne, bishop of Bayonne.

Another effect of Maurice's expedition was a second dispersion of the council of Trent. No sooner did the fathers hear of the capture of Augsburg, than many of them took their departure, and the rest, assembling on the 28th of April, prorogued the council for two years. Such bodies however, when once separated, are not easily reassembled, and ten years elapsed before the council met again, under the pontificate of Pius IV.

But the work of Maurice was well-nigh finished, when he had accomplished this unlooked-for revolution in Germany. In less than a year after the treaty of Passau, he fell in battle against one of his associates in his late enterprise. Albert marquis of Brandenburg-Culmbach,¹ who had throughout acted in a very disorderly manner, was notwithstanding allowed to be included in the treaty, provided he on his part should accede to it. But he declined to do so, and chose rather to carry on a lawless and predatory warfare, in which he inflicted great calamities on many of the German states, and left it always in uncertainty which would be the next object of his attack. He was in consequence condemned by the imperial chamber, which deputed Maurice, with the aid of some other princes, to put him down by force. They met in battle at Sieverhausen, in the dutchy of Lunenburg, June 9, 1553, where Albert was defeated with great loss, but Maurice received a wound from a pistol-shot, of which he died two days after. This extraordinary man, who had, by his great talents and unrivalled artifice, wrought changes, apparently so disproportioned to the power which he originally possessed, had not completed the thirty-second year of his age. It has been with some justice remarked, that "the ends which he had in view," in the critical junctures of his life, "seem to have been more attended to than the means by which he attained

¹ Not the master of the Teutonic knights, or "of Prussia." Above, vol. i. p. 243.

them; and he was now as universally extolled for his zeal and public spirit, as he had lately been condemned for his indifference and interested policy.”¹ Traces of this sort of judgment concerning him I have found even in the writings of wise and good men,² who shared the benefit of his later services: but it is a mode of judging against which it behoves us sedulously to guard; and I fear we must pronounce, that, however the talents of Maurice may command our admiration, and the final result of his measures gratify our wishes, there was little in his principles which we can respect or approve.

The diet for the final settlement of religious affairs was to have been held within six months after the conclusion of the treaty of Passau: but, in consequence of the disorders produced in Germany by Albert of Brandenburg, the wars in which the emperor continued to be engaged against France and in Italy, and Ferdinand's occupation in defending his dominions against the Turks, it did not meet for two years and a half. It was at length opened at Augsburg, February 5, 1555. Ferdinand at first proposed the old and futile expedient of a conference and a compromise. But, this being agreeable to no party, and the protestants, who received the proposal with aversion and even alarm, as falling much short of the provisions of the treaty of Passau, beginning to hold formidable meetings on the occasion, it was abandoned; and in the end a free toleration in their religion, of all such states as received the Confession of Augsburg, was agreed to, and solemnly proclaimed in the recess of the diet.

The question which created the most difficulty and debate related to the course to be adopted in the case of ecclesiastics, in future, renouncing the Romish for the protestant faith. The dignitaries of the Roman-catholic church, it was agreed, were to exer-

¹ Robertson.

² Melancthon, Camerarius, &c.

cise no jurisdiction in protestant states; and the ecclesiastical benefices and revenues, which were in protestant hands before the treaty of Passau, were still to remain so; but, if a Roman-catholic in possession of a dignity or benefice became protestant, was he to forfeit his preferment, or to be allowed to retain it? Considering the eagerness with which this point was contested on both sides, it appears surprising that no compromise was attempted. It was expressly allowed to the supreme civil power, in each state, to establish that form of doctrine and worship which it might prefer: would it not therefore have been natural, that, where the establishment was protestant, an ecclesiastic becoming Roman-catholic should resign his preferment, as well as that, under a Roman-catholic establishment, one should do so who became protestant? Yet no arrangement of this kind appears to have been proposed or adverted to in the discussions which took place. Each side simply contended either for or against the reformed Romanist retaining the situation, which he had held previously to his change of sentiments.—In the end the Romish party prevailed, and the protestants were constrained to acquiesce in the regulation called the *ecclesiastical reservation*, by which it was enacted, that the churchman embracing protestant principles should forfeit his preferment, but should be subjected to no further molestation: and this article in the peace of religion, it is observed, has proved, as it was foreseen by both parties that it probably would do, the great barrier against the extension of the reformation in Germany.

Thus, after a long-protracted struggle, was a settlement effected, of that kind which alone can be denominated just and reasonable, or which has ever availed to heal such differences. But mutual toleration, or religious liberty, was here introduced more from the necessity of the case, than upon any enlarged and enlightened principle; as the exclusion

from this benefit of every other denomination, separate from the church of Rome, except that of the Confession of Augsburg, too fully demonstrates.¹ The great principle, that to God alone, and not to his fellow-creatures, is a man accountable for his religious belief; and that, so long as he conducts himself as a peaceable subject, he is entitled to the full protection of the magistrate—a principle the very opposite of that which had been received and acted upon during the long reign of popery—was as yet scarcely discovered by here and there a scattered individual: and almost ages more elapsed before it was to any considerable extent proclaimed and admitted.²

Proportioned to the degree in which the recess of the diet of Augsburg contravened, and tended to subvert those principles, which the Roman pontiff's had ever laboured to establish, was the indignation

¹ Religious liberty was not formally extended to the followers of Zwingle and Calvin till nearly a century afterwards, by the treaty of Westphalia, which terminated the thirty years' war, in 1648.

² It could not be expected that either governments or individuals should speedily divest themselves of the system of persecution, which flowed from the maxims of so many preceding ages, and still retained its hold upon the mind, even after the original error, on which it was founded, had been detected and renounced. They were incapable of at once tracing to its just consequences the discovery which they themselves had made. Hence were derived those *comparatively* few and trifling instances of persecution, with which the reformers themselves were chargeable, and which at this day many delight to blazon as if they were equivalent to the wholesale systematic butcheries of the church of Rome, and placed her and the reformed churches on an equal footing.

It will be remembered that even Dr. Robertson has said, "Luther, Calvin, Cranmer, Knox, the founders of the reformed church in their respective countries, *as far as they had power and opportunity*, inflicted the same punishments upon such as called in question *any* article in their creeds, which were denounced against their own followers by the church of Rome." It is to be lamented that this respectable writer should have lent the sanction of his name to so grossly overcharged a statement, and thus have helped to countenance the flippant attempts of pretended philosophers to cast obloquy upon religion. The utter falsehood of the charge, as far as Luther is concerned, has been already exposed throughout the preceding history.

expressed against it by the reigning pope. Julius III, had died soon after the diet assembled, and his immediate successor, Marcellus III, (a pontiff of a very promising character,) having survived his elevation only twenty-one days, the papal chair was now occupied by Paul IV.—a man worthy to have been the immediate successor of Hildebrand. On receiving advice of the recess of Augsburg, he gave way to the most violent transports of passion. He insisted to the imperial ambassador, that the decree should immediately be declared null and void, as an impious act, founded in the sacrilegious usurpation of powers belonging only to the holy see; and he threatened vengeance against both the emperor and king Ferdinand, if they did not promptly comply with his demand. In vain did the ambassador urge the extreme distress to which the emperor, his master, had been reduced at Inspruck, and under which he had been compelled to form the engagements that had led to the present result. The pope answered, “that he absolved him from his oaths, yea commanded him not to observe them.” And, in short, moved by this provocation, and wrought upon by the ambitious intrigues of his nephews, he instantly threw himself into the interest of the king of France, who was at war with the emperor.—But papal violence had at this time become comparatively harmless. As for Charles himself, when all his schemes for establishing political and religious despotism in Germany, and transmitting it to his posterity,¹ were dashed in pieces, in the manner that has been described, he became indifferent to the affairs of the empire generally, and in particular to the question of religion, and to the subject of the council as connected with it: and it is not to be doubted, that the disappointment and chagrin he had suffered operated powerfully among the causes that

¹ He spared no pains to induce his brother Ferdinand to surrender the splendid reversion of the empire in favour of his son Philip.

induced him to form and execute the extraordinary measure of resigning his vast dominions—his hereditary ones in the close of the present year, and those which were elective in the year following—and himself retiring into private life. After this remarkable step, he passed about two years in a state of almost monastic seclusion; and he is supposed to have accelerated his death by the severity of the discipline to which he subjected himself. In this retirement he is said to have discovered not only the vanity of all his past schemes of ambition, but the folly of the attempts, on which he had bestowed so great a portion of his time and labour, to compel men to think alike, or at least to profess the same sentiments, on the deep and mysterious subjects of religion. Several historians of reputation have even asserted, that, as he drew near his end, and was more deeply impressed with the awful thought of appearing before the divine tribunal, he approximated more and more to some of the leading doctrines of Luther, particularly that of justification by faith; and it is certain that, after his decease, some of those who had been his latest confidential attendants suffered as heretics. A living writer, however, intimately acquainted with the history of this period, particularly as connected with the reformation, seems but too clearly to have shewn that these favourable conjectures concerning Charles's state of mind in his latter days are without foundation; and that, so far from repenting of his conduct towards the protestants, "his only regret was that he had treated them with so much leniency." "He ought," he said, "to have forgotten his word" passed to Luther at Worms, "and avenged the injury that heretic had done to God."¹ Charles died September 21, 1558, at the age of fifty-eight years.

During all this period but little presents itself to gratify the taste of the spiritual mind, in quest of the

¹ M'Crie's *Ref. in Spain*, p. 246—250.

interior history of the true church of Christ. Scenes of warfare and ambitious conflict, where men are kept in a state of constant excitement and agitation, and the affairs of religion are controlled by mere secular characters, in subservience to their own selfish designs, must be deplorably unfavourable to the growth of piety. "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace:" and we cannot be sufficiently thankful for a settled state of society; though, at the same time we have need to take care that we do not abuse the repose and the opportunity it affords us, to become in another way "mindful of earthly things," and to seek our rest and portion here below. Still however we may trust, that at the period under review many pious pastors were feeding their flocks, and many humble souls were trained up for heaven at a distance from the din and bustle of the transactions which fill the page of history. The correspondence of Melancthon furnishes us with the most pleasing traces of this kind, that we are acquainted with, for this whole period; and from his writings we shall now lay before the reader some extracts illustrative of these subjects.

On two contending pastors at Zwickau, he pathetically urges the cultivation of harmony and mutual affection, and thus beautifully describes the effect of peace within the church, in troublous times. "Under all troubles, public and private, it is an unspeakable relief to the hearts of men to see the church where they live in a state of tranquillity. The mind of man chiefly finds repose in prayer to God, which is greatly hindered and interrupted where discord is even within view. Now, since public calamities at the present time greatly afflict numbers, it behoves every pastor to keep his church, as much as possible, like a safe harbour, in which the distressed people may take refuge, and be refreshed by communion with God."

His exhortations to various pious ministers, from

the time when the Interim was first projected, to maintain their posts, and go on undismayed in their work as long as they possibly could do it, are interesting and edifying. He counsels Pfeffinger of Leipzig, and John Mathesius, in such circumstances to avoid not only political discussions, but all doubtful points of theology; to denounce the sins both of princes and people, as the cause of the existing calamities; to inculcate repentance, reconciliation with God, and the duty of prayer; to direct men to the true source of consolation; to shew them the difference between devout and superstitious worship, and thus to fortify their minds against the corruptions which some might introduce; to reprove those who would inflame the different parties one against another; to move all to sympathise with the sufferers; and to exhort persons in authority to adopt peaceable counsels. And, with respect to the event of their labours directed to such ends, he quotes the words of the Psalm, "He that now goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." "I am convinced," he elsewhere says, "that in this world the true heavenly doctrine will ever have to maintain a conflict with errors and corruptions, and that those who uphold the cause of divine truth will be under the cross, and suffer for their principles. From the beginning of the world it has been so: and holy and enlightened men know that these things must be borne."

In a paper on the question, which it appears embarrassed some persons, of offering public prayers for the emperor, while he was waging war against them, he makes some fine observations on the difficulties attending true prayer. "First, we have to get our minds impressed with just sentiments concerning God—that he will hear prayer—and on what grounds he will hear it. And this is difficult.—Then the real exercise of faith is still more difficult: to

draw near to God when our sins would deter us, and drive us to a distance; and to expect help when we are destitute of all visible protection.—Next comes the due consideration of our own wants, and of those of the persons for whom we are to pray. Now to apply the mind to so many topics, and at the same moment to be afflicted, and to relieve our affliction by the exercise of faith—experience shews all this to be most difficult. Yet, whenever the devout mind calls upon God under a genuine conviction of its sins and its wants, these several things are necessary: and the prayer in which they concur is the effectual one. There is great need therefore for ministers to admonish their people upon these topics.—We must first learn to pray for ourselves: then follows (what presents another difficulty,) a due regard for the wants and the afflictions of the church: to implore of God that he would rule and direct its pastors; would protect and guide all that are engaged in the study of his truth; would bring discords and divisions to an end; would repress hypocrites and the wise men of this world, who care nothing for religion; and would manifest his favour to the truly pious and righteous.”

A constant spirit of prayer for the church at large, for his own family, and for all his numerous correspondents and their various connexions, is one fine trait of Melancthon's epistles. And the subject of prayer itself, we may also remark, is one which he ever treats in a very delightful manner. He has a due sense of its importance; and he deeply feels how tender a plant, and how liable to be crushed and withered in the unkindly soil and climate of this world, is a genuine spirit of devotion. He therefore anxiously watches over it, and fears lest it should be hurt or lost in the church, amid the disorders that prevailed. He deprecates our entertaining notions or reasonings, which might “weaken the spirit of prayer.” “Nothing,” he says, “is so tender, nothing

so easily disordered, as a spirit of devotion: nor is any thing more distressing or more injurious than its being crippled and enfeebled." Again: "We know that by all discords, great or small, prayer is hindered: and, when prayer is interrupted, some run into profaneness or atheism, and others sink in anguish of mind and desperation."

Writing on a passage of Isaiah, he makes the following remark on the interpretation of scripture: "It is necessary in the church diligently to investigate and adhere to the simple, natural, grammatical sense of scripture. We are to listen to the divine word, not to corrupt it. We must not *play tricks* with it, by fanciful interpretations, as many in all ages have done. The plain natural sense of scripture always carries with it the richest and most valuable instruction."¹

Giving advice, as it would appear, to a young divine, he admirably shews, in few words, the need of learning to a preacher; the want of it in some, and the abuse of it in others; and censures the folly of aiming to catch the admiration of hearers by gaudy language. He then introduces the following description of a preacher, such as he would wish his friend to become. "On the other hand there are those who bring from home with them the (one) design, to speak what is useful and necessary, in appropriate and expressive words. They arrange their matter; they set it forth and explain it; they admonish their hearers what practical use is to be made of every thing delivered; they introduce striking quotations to impress the mind, and examples for illustration; that from the whole the people may know what to treasure up in their memories, and carry away with them. They add motives: they address the affections—awaken fear by the awful

¹ So Luther: "The literal meaning of scripture is the whole foundation of faith—the only thing that stands its ground in distress and temptation."

threatenings of God's word, and excite hope and confidence by its promises. Now they distinctly exhibit the law, and now the gospel, clearly marking the difference between them. One while they are simply expositors of scripture; another, they powerfully address the heart and conscience; rousing men's minds, not by redundant declamation, but by an appropriate solemnity of address.—Such a preacher have I known in Martin Luther.”¹

This was written from Wittemberg, in the interval between the war of Smalkald and that by which Maurice broke the power of Charles V; and the writer adds, “My letter is a hasty effusion in a time of sickness. I feel that I materially injure myself by constant speaking in my public lectures—my strength having been previously broken by cares and labours. But what else is life, than a passage through troubles to a better state? Let us only endeavour that our labours may serve the church of God, and make known his truth.”

These passages give us some insight into what was going on for the edification of the church. Nor are we left without notices, which shew that the reformed doctrines were still making progress in these troublous times.

John Frisius, abbot of Neustadt in Franconia, is particularly mentioned as having been, in the year 1554, cited before his diocesan at Wurtzburg on suspicion of having embraced Lutheran opinions. A list of more than forty questions, comprising all the points at issue between protestants and papists, was presented to him, and his answers required. He

¹ Elsewhere he especially commends modesty and an unassuming temper in candidates for the ministry. He was pleased with a young man who desired for a time to apply himself to the humbler modes of teaching; “for,” he says, “those who hastily press forward to the high office of public preachers too frequently shew that they seek popular applause. Let us encourage modesty, and inculcate upon young men moderation of mind.”

gave them explicitly, confirming his sentiments from the scriptures and the fathers; and in consequence suffered deprivation.

We formerly saw with pleasure the strong bearing of the public mind in favour of reformation in the Austrian dominions, and witnessed with pain the manner in which it was opposed and overborne.¹ Similar scenes still present themselves in that quarter. In the year 1554, Ferdinand found it necessary to issue an edict commanding his subjects to make no innovation in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. The princes, nobles, and cities made strong representations in reply, entreating that this sacrament might be administered among them according to Christ's institution and the practice of the primitive church.

Again, a few months after the peace of religion, having occasion to assemble the states of Austria, at Vienna, to provide the means of resisting the Turks, Ferdinand was surprised to find their first address to him turn on the subject of religion. They observed, that for fourteen years past they had been soliciting him for relief with respect to it, but in vain; that in the mean time no success had attended the efforts made against the enemy, who rather became more formidable; that this indicated the displeasure of God lying upon the country for its sins; so that, "unless God's word were received, and a reformation of manners promoted, they were likely to lose, not only their fortunes and their lives, but their eternal salvation." From time to time, they state, the object of their application had been postponed; but they now entreat him to consider, "how grievous it was to persons, who most ardently desired the salvation of their souls, to be put off to an indefinite period, while in the mean time their minds were kept in anguish, and many thousands must end their days

¹ Above, p. 137.

in anxiety and doubt. Certainly," they say, "the word of God, which was revealed to us by Jesus Christ our Saviour, ought to be the only rule which the church should follow; and, if any thing had crept in contrary to that standard, it ought to be rejected, to whatever antiquity it might lay claim." They implore him therefore, "by the death of Christ, by the salvation of their souls, and by that judgment which shall pass upon all men, that he would allow them, seeing they were not corrupted by any sectarian principles, to live in the true and pure religion, and to enjoy the benefit of the peace lately made in the diet with those who professed the Confession of Augsburg."

Ferdinand, in reply, told them, that he could not grant their petition, not for want of inclination to gratify them, but because the thing itself was unlawful, inasmuch as he was bound to hear the church. He admitted that they were no less included in the peace of religion than the subjects of any other German prince: but then "the plain meaning of the decree was, *that the people should follow the religion of their prince*; giving liberty however to those, who were not satisfied with that religion, to sell their estates, and to remove whither they pleased."

The subjects of Albert duke of Bavaria, also, were about this time "very troublesome" to him, by demands similar to those made upon his father-in-law, Ferdinand, by the Austrians. But they had little better success; and to this day these two countries, where the chains of religious bondage are riveted by the hand of civil despotism, remain more under the power of Romish superstition, than perhaps any others in Germany.

The Polish ambassador we are likewise told, who had come to congratulate the pope on his elevation, marred all his intended compliments, and gave the most intolerable offence, by demanding, in the name of the king and kingdom, that mass should be cele-

brated amongst them in the vernacular language, the eucharist administered in both kinds, marriage allowed to the clergy, the payment of annates abolished, and a national council assembled in Poland to reform abuses and settle disputed doctrines.

Even in Spain indications were found of a vast scheme being on foot for the propagation of the opinions of Luther throughout the Peninsula: but the seeds of protestantism were crushed in the very infancy of their growth in that country, by the iron hand of the inquisition.¹

At the same time, whatever had been wanting to the complete reformation of the Palatinate was supplied by the accession of Otho Henry to the electoral dignity. He prohibited the performance of mass, and the use of the Romish ceremonies throughout his dominions.²

These accounts of the progress of the reformation give evidence that persecution still more or less attended it. This was from time to time carried on with great severity in France; and the latter part of the period which we have been reviewing, was that of the Marian persecution in England.

In his reply to the states of Austria, Ferdinand boasted that he had never compelled any man to forsake "the true religion," nor ever would do it: but we must allow him to put his own interpretation exclusively on the term, in order to give even the semblance of truth to the declaration. One of the circumstances which had rendered his opening speech in the diet of Augsburg, in 1555, alarming to the protestants was, that it was accompanied by the report that he had banished about two hundred ministers out of Bohemia—a report which was soon too fully confirmed. To these exiles Melancthon wrote a letter in the name of himself and his friends at Wittemberg, from which some extracts may here be given.

¹ M'Crie's Reform. in Spain.

² Above, p. 211.

It is dated February 13, 1555, and is addressed “to the venerable and learned pastors teaching the true doctrines of the gospel on the borders of Bohemia and Lusatia.” Probably, when driven out of Bohemia, they might remain in Lusatia, (which was for the most part subject to the elector of Saxony,) near to their former residence; or some of them might not yet be actually expelled; which may account for what is said of their still continuing to confirm their people.—“We are greatly distressed at the news of your exile, both for your sakes, and for the sake of your churches; and we implore the Son of God, who hath said, ‘I will not leave you orphans,’ to relieve these calamities, and to afford you the help of which you stand in need. . . . As nothing tends more to support the mind than a clear understanding of the truth, present to your flocks, as long as it is in your power to hold communication with them, the two systems in strong contrast to one another. The papal faction uphold manifest idolatry—the invocation of the dead, with many monstrous superstitions growing out of it. They impiously prostitute the sacrament of the Lord’s supper for gain, and worship the bread which they carry in procession. They take away the true doctrine of the gospel concerning repentance; invent vain satisfactions for sins; torment humble consciences by the confessions which they make necessary to forgiveness; destroy the consolation proposed to us in the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ; and establish modes of worship of human invention. Never let the people think, when our differences are on such points as these, that we excite unnecessary controversies. Often therefore let them hear a summary of the true doctrine: and set before them the solemn sentences, ‘Flee from idolatry: If any man teach another gospel, let him be anathema: The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven.’—These thunders of the word of God fail of dismaying the enemies of the

gospel, many of whom knowingly oppose the truth. They flatter themselves, and feign deceitful pretexts for their conduct.—Be sure that the churches of these parts will never be wanting to you, when they can render you any friendly and hospitable services.”

It is deeply to be regretted, that, beset as the protestant church in Germany was by external enemies, it should not have been at peace within itself. But we are compelled again to advert to the various and bitter controversies, by which it was agitated from the very termination of the Smalkaldic war.

The sacramental controversy was now revived, and carried on with much acrimony. Hardenberg of Bremen, a disciple of Melancthon's, embraced the Zwinglian doctrine; to which Melancthon himself is believed to have become less and less averse as he advanced in life: while Westphal of Hamburg maintained that of Luther; and Calvin, Bullinger, and John à Lasco subsequently engaged in the dispute. Brentius, who had shewn himself no very mild partisan in behalf of Luther's doctrine on this subject, observes upon it, “I know not whether any thing more obstructed the cause of the reformation, and the progress of the heavenly doctrine, than this controversy.” But we shall enter no further into the painful subject than to transcribe the following remark, which has been made upon Luther's conduct relative to it, and the lesson to be derived from the review of the whole. “No historical topic can be more instructive to every class of readers, and especially to those whose opinions may have weight in a revival of religion, than this lamentable discussion. The only question on which Luther lost his temper, betrayed his cause, injured the progress of reformation, grieved the Spirit of grace, and split the infant church, was *that in which he was most clearly wrong*. . . . Let those who are in danger of magnifying

points in dispute be warned by this example. Let them see how prone to error are the greatest and purest minds; let them be slow in committing themselves beyond the exact prescriptions of revealed truth; and, above all, let them dread erecting such points into terms of communion, and creating a lasting division in the affections of Christians.”¹

The adiaphoristic controversy also was still carried on, and extended to new points, with bitter animosity against Melancthon and his friends. To Flacius, the prime leader on the other side, Melancthon says, in 1556: “You claim great credit for not publishing as mine a letter which I never wrote, but which is a mere forgery. . . You have published the Leipzig formulary, both garbled and interpolated. What moves you to attack an old friend, who has loved you, with such arts as these?”—To the pastors of the Saxon churches he writes on the same subject: “I receive in silence the buffets that are given me; yet Flacius and Gallus² never cease to revile me. Both the courts of princes and the people are excited against me with wonderful artifice: yet the mischief would only be increased, and fresh controversies raised, should I answer them. I look to the judgment of wise and good men, who are not alienated from me by the clamours and calumnies of my adversaries. I am cheered by the hope that in a little time, under the guidance of the Son of God, I shall quit the confusions of this world, and join the church in the heavenly state, where peace reigns, and truth is contemplated with unmixed delight. I hope also, that an enlightened posterity will judge more equitably of my labours.” Melancthon however could not always restrain his friends within the limits which he prescribed to himself: and their interposition, we are

¹ Christian Observer, 1827, p. 46. (By the present bishop of Calcutta.)

² Nicholas Gallus, another eager partisan.

told, on some occasions did but inflame the existing evil, and add 'oil to the fire.'

The questions relative to justification will be more interesting to us. The notion of Osiander upon this all-important subject has been already explained. He held that we are justified, not by virtue of Christ's obedience unto death for us, but by the essential righteousness of the divine nature, in some mystical manner imparted to us, and dwelling in us. A brief remark or two of Melancthon's upon this dogma are all that need be quoted; but some notice of its author may not be without instruction, as furnishing a warning against vanity and self-conceit.

Andrew Osiander (the same whose niece our Cranmer married,) was a native of Bavaria, who, after studying at Wittemberg, settled in his own country. He was a man of considerable talents and attainments, being, in particular, master of a popular eloquence; and he early distinguished himself in the cause of the reformation. But all his more valuable qualities were vitiated, and rendered to a great degree useless, by a large mixture of arrogance, conceit, and fondness for new discoveries in religion. Of this he gave a very offensive proof at the conference of Marpurg, in 1529. By desire of the landgrave, each of the divines there present was to preach in his turn. Luther took for his subject the great question, "How shall man be just with God?" Osiander the next day took the same text as Luther had done, and "philosophized concerning righteousness," with such refinement as disgusted the wiser part of his hearers, and raised a suspicion that he secretly cherished more novelties than he was willing to avow. To his sermons and conversation, however, at the diet of Nuremberg, seven years after this time, is attributed the conversion, to the protestant faith, of the elder Albert of Brandenburg:¹ whence, on quitting his

¹ Vol. i. p. 243.

situation at Nuremberg at the period of the Interim, Osiander, at Albert's invitation, removed into Prussia, to the university then recently founded at Königsberg. During Luther's lifetime he had been held under restraint by the influence of that reformer, but afterwards, as he himself flippantly and in very unbecoming language expressed it, 'When the lion was dead, he cared not for the foxes.' Hence he broached many strange dogmas, the memory of which was soon lost in that concerning justification. This last continued to excite much controversy for some time after the death of its author in 1552, till at length the dispute was happily appeased, and the true doctrine of the reformation publicly established in Prussia.

Melancthon remarks on Osiander's notion of justification: "Osiander holds that we are righteous by the divinity dwelling in us. This differs little from the doctrine of the heathen philosophers, who taught that man attains not to virtue but by a divine influence. We also readily acknowledge that God dwells in the regenerate, so as to produce not only virtuous emotions, but even the commencement of eternal life—to make us 'partakers,' as S. Peter expresses it, 'of a divine nature.'... But then there exists a question of another kind: How may man receive remission of sins and reconciliation with God? or have righteousness imputed, or reckoned, unto him? Is this from the indwelling of Christ in us, or by his obedience for us?... Osiander in effect says, that we are justified by our renovation to holiness. We, on the other hand, while we admit the necessity of renovation, hold that the renewed man is justified, or accepted of God, for the sake of Christ's obedience." Again: "I regard Osiander's dogma as no mere strife of words. He differs from our churches on a very essential point, and obscures, or rather destroys, the only consolation provided for distressed consciences; seeing he leads us not to the promise of mercy, through the obedi-

ence of the Mediator, but directs us to another object."

On the error of Lauterwald, who in another way corrupted the same great doctrine, we may be tempted to offer somewhat larger extracts, because, though it less agitated the protestant church at the time, it was a species of error which has spread its influence much more widely, and been much more permanent. It bordered closely on what was maintained by the more temperate papists, Pflug at Ratisbon, Gropper at Cologne, and Heldingus in the Interim; and it is virtually the same which is still supported by great names among ourselves, though it could never to any considerable extent make its way among protestants in the age of the reformation.

Matthias Lauterwald was the minister of Eperies, in Upper Hungary. He had been known and esteemed at Wittemberg: but was fond of refinements, and too prone to contention. His sentiment was, that our repentance, our love, our obedience are all *included* in the faith that justifies us, and are thus conjointly with it the means of procuring us the benefit of Christ's redemption. On this Melancthon thus speaks, in delivering "the judgment of the university of Wittemberg," to the senate of Eperies, in the year 1554. "Though true faith, or reliance on the Saviour, cannot exist in those who go on securely in their sins, and are destitute of contrition, yet contrition and new obedience are not, as Lauterwald would make them, the means of applying the promise of grace. Contrition necessarily precedes; but when he asks, Whether as a cause or means? we answer, As neither, but rather as a wound, or the feeling that we are wounded, precedes a cure.—The whole human race is obnoxious to the dreadful anger of God. A sense of this is awakened in the mind either by the ministry of the word, by our experiencing the consequences of sin, or by other means. Under these convictions many perish, quarrelling

with the divine judgment, or with Epicurean contempt setting it at defiance. Others, casting away the arms of rebellion, and seeking consolation from the gospel, receive remission of sins, reconciliation with God, justification, and quickening (or renovation) by the Holy Ghost. And here the promise is embraced and applied only by faith, or assiance in the Mediator, and not on account of our contrition, or the virtues that follow after. Faith relies only on the Mediator, or on the mercies promised for his sake; in which the heart rests, knowing that the promises are sure in him."—The writer then quotes some apposite passages of scripture, Psalm vi. 4, Daniel ix. 17, 18, Romans iv. 16, and proceeds: "In order to understand these scriptures, we must cherish, not idle speculations, but true convictions of sin, and the genuine consolation which is found in turning to God, and calling upon him daily. We teach not empty refinements, but divine truth; what is most necessary in practice, and easily intelligible to pious minds. We say, that men, *all* men, ought to be convinced of sin by the word of God, and, under this alarm of conscience, to fly by faith to the Mediator; and that by this faith, gratuitously, not for the sake of works either antecedent or consequent, remission of sins, reconciliation with God, and justification are received; and that those who thus believe in the Son of God are quickened by him, who speaks peace to their consciences, and delivers their hearts from the pains of hell, by his Spirit given unto them: and that thus new obedience is begun.—That these things take place in true conversion is matter of experience to all pious persons.—Never would David say that he had remission of sins for the sake of his good works now performed, either in whole or in part.—Let us put such corruptions of the truth far from us, and not suffer humble souls to be deprived of their true consolation. Under real distress of conscience, no ground of comfort will avail but that which

S. Paul lays down, ‘Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure.’”

We add a few more sentences from the same important paper. “Lauterwald’s corruption of the doctrine does not differ from the synecdoche of the monks,¹ who say that faith justifies us as being the originating principle of love and of good works. But the fact is this, nothing but faith *lays hold* on the promise. In this, faith differs from all other works, that it alone embraces the promise, and receives the blessing as unmerited. Other works offer something to God: nor can the application of the blessing by means of works be understood in any other way, than that they effect it by some merit which they possess. Lauterwald therefore, while he rejects the name of merit, retains the thing, and imposes upon himself by vain speculations.—As to his urging that grace is promised to a *complete* repentance, if he does not make the just distinction between the different things comprehended under that name, and assign to each its proper place and office, we do not admit his position. To *contrition* grace is promised, as healing to a wound: *faith* applies the remedy: but in no sense can it be said that pardon is promised in consideration of the *works* to follow.—He will say perhaps, this is only reciting our constant ditty. And we admit that we do constantly repeat the same doctrine on this subject; because no other is true.”

It must be superfluous again to point out, how precisely this is the doctrine of our own Articles and Homilies. “Because by faith, given us of God, we *embrace the promise* of God’s mercy, and of the remission of sins—WHICH NONE OTHER OF OUR VIRTUES OR WORKS PROPERLY DOTH—therefore the scripture useth to say, that faith without works doth justify.”

¹ By which faith was considered as a comprehensive name for all Christian graces and virtues.

“ Faith doth not shut out repentance, hope, love, dread, and the fear of God, to be joined with faith in every man that is justified ; but it SHUTTETH THEM OUT FROM THE OFFICE OF JUSTIFYING. So that, although they be all present together, yet THEY JUSTIFY NOT ALL TOGETHER.”¹

Considerable dispute also arose about this time concerning the exclusive term *only*, as annexed to *faith*, in speaking of justification. Of this however, after what we have already seen, our notice may be very brief. In what sense the term *faith only* was and is applied, must be evident to every candid inquirer ; namely, not as denying the cöexistence of other Christian graces along with faith in the man that is justified, but only as excluding them from the office of justifying him : not, again, as making faith to be his justifying righteousness, but only the link which connects him with the Saviour, by whom, and for whose sake, he is justified.—Flacius, it seems, accused Melancthon of having given up the exclusive term : he in reply declares, “ I never said, I never wrote, I never thought, that it was an inaccuracy, or a mere refinement, that we are justified by faith *only*. On the contrary, I have said and written more in explanation and defence of this form of speaking, than others have done. When our adversaries urged that the term *only* did not occur in the scriptures, I always answered, that exclusive terms were frequently repeated by S. Paul upon this subject.—They plead that faith is not *alone* in us. I admit this in all its extent, when speaking of the faith to which we ascribe justification ; and, to preclude the misunderstanding of the subject which the objection supposes, I have said that I would not contend for a particular term, and have sometimes substituted the word *gratis*, or *freely*, which S. Paul, a master in the use of terms, has also employed.”—

¹ Homily of Salvation.

Such is the substance of Melancthon's answer, frequently repeated; and it shews the whole 'head and front of his offending,' for which he was fiercely assailed in his own day, and for which unfounded charges are still brought against him.¹

The controversy which arose concerning the necessity of good works to salvation may chiefly deserve to be noticed, as affording a warning against pushing to an extreme sentiments, which have a right foundation, and are in their just sense, and within their proper limits, of essential importance; or against deducing extravagant and dangerous inferences from such sentiments. Even Amsdorf, the old friend of Luther, now went the length of maintaining, "that good works not only were not necessary to salvation, but were an obstruction to it!" And at a much earlier period Melancthon writes: "Cordatus stirs up against me the city, the surrounding countries, and the court itself, because, in explaining the controversy concerning justification, I said that renewed obedience was necessary to salvation." Yet these persons did not mean to be antinomians, or to encourage an abuse of the grace of God; but they had unhappily possessed their minds with the idea, that good works could not be insisted on as in any sense necessary to salvation, without their being made necessary to procure it, as a meritorious cause.

In another contention into which Flacius fell with Strigelius, a brother professor at Jena, he is said to have gone the extravagant length of maintaining "that original sin is the very *substance* of human nature," and to have persisted in this strange position to his dying day.

We shall here notice only one more of these harassing controversies. This was raised by Francesco Stancari, a native of Mantua, but a professor in the university of Königsberg, who, being com-

¹ Above, pp. 289—291.

pelled to quit his situation in consequence of his opposition to the dogma of Osiander, retired to Francfort on the Oder. He is described as a man of a turbulent spirit; and he fell into the error of supposing that he had somewhat of importance to teach the church, in maintaining that the mediatorial office of our Saviour was discharged exclusively in his human nature. We shall transcribe a short sentence from Melancthon upon the subject. "I hesitate not," he says, "to pronounce Stancari's notion an error: for to the Mediator it belongs not only to die, but that his death should be an equivalent ransom for men; and that he should be the conqueror of death. Also that he should be a priest entering into the holiest of all—into the secret council of the Most High. Yea, moreover, that he should sanctify the hearts of men by giving to them his Holy Spirit. But these things belong to the divine nature."

All these scenes of fierce controversy, so soon rising in the reformed churches, present, no doubt, a mournful spectacle. They wofully display the tendencies of human nature, and the art and malice of the great enemy of divine truth and human happiness. Defects may probably be pointed out, through which the Lutheran church failed of opposing the proper checks to a rising spirit of contention and insubordination: yet even these defects, with all their consequences, afford not that matter of triumph to the Romanist, which he affects to find in them. It is better to have some disorder than the stillness of universal death. Besides, no such unity as he boasts has existed in his own church: as the history of the council of Trent, to make no other appeal, abundantly demonstrates.—But the narrative before us affords most important and seasonable warning to ourselves. Fierce contentions have too frequently followed close upon remarkable revivals of religion, and have deformed their character and arrested their progress. These contentions have in great part arisen

from well-intentioned and zealous men pushing things to extremes, being too impatient to allow themselves to pause in order to define and explain, and thus drowning the voice of truth amid the din of loud assertion and impetuous dispute. But that which was violent and extreme could never continue long: it is not in the nature of things that it should do so. With the temperate, and the calm, and the moderate—provided only that they do not compromise substantial truth—is wisdom: and with them also is endurance; while that which carries things beyond all due bounds soon passes off: nay, very commonly it opens the way for that which is in the contrary extreme to succeed it. The overstrained discipline of the Novatians, refusing to restore the lapsed, and insisting on rebaptising those who had received the initiatory sacrament from the hands of heretics, was soon generally condemned; and it disappeared. The high presbyterianism, which insisted that its form of church government in all its parts, with all the rules for the conduct of public worship, was to be found in scripture, and that not the minutest observance was to be admitted which was not prescribed there, has long since given way before the more temperate doctrine for which Hooker contended. The fierce opposition which was once made to surplices and bands and gowns is now lamented by all parties, and some of these vestments are adopted even by the successors of those who led that opposition. And where has *ultra*-Calvinism ever long maintained its ground? In short every thing extreme is studiously to be avoided, if we would durably promote the true interests of the church of Christ. This is a lesson which may much need to be regarded in our day. True religion has been extensively revived: the genuine doctrines of the reformation, which are those of the gospel itself, have spread to an extent hardly ever before known among us: we are to guard, no doubt, against those who would

tamper with them, and dilute them, and frustrate their efficacy by worldly associations and a worldly spirit: but we are no less to guard against those who would carry them to an extreme; who would overstate and overstrain them; who would vitiate them by unscriptural inferences, and lay them open to antinomian abuse by crude and unwarranted statements; or who disgrace them by violence of spirit, and a contemptuous treatment of such as cannot go *their* lengths. By such proceedings the seeds of decay were sown in the Lutheran church at a very early period: and, as Romish superstition has generated infidelity, so it is to be apprehended that the refinements and the contentions, which followed the death of Luther, might do much towards gradually preparing the way for the neology and the other abominations of modern German protestantism.¹ “Be not high-minded, but fear. Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”

¹ In the fancies of Caspar Schwenckfeldt, apparently a pious, but a weak and enthusiastic man, who caused some trouble to the reformers, we may perhaps trace somewhat of the *mysticism* which infests protestant Germany; while Thammer, of whom Melancthon asserts, that he “transformed the gospel into heathenish allegories,” may have afforded an early specimen of modern German neologism.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Remainder of Melancthon's history—Further extracts from his Epistles—His Works—Notices of Lutheran Reformers.

THE character and services of Melancthon, his intimate connexion with the reformation during the whole of its progress, and the leading station which he occupied ever after the death of Luther, all peculiarly entitle him to our high regard, and render it proper that, though we have traced the Lutheran reformation to its regular and peaceful establishment in Germany, we should not close our history without attending him to the end of his earthly career.

Melancthon survived the peace of religion five years, which were laboriously employed, as the preceding thirty-seven had been, in the service of sound learning and divine truth. He continued to the last involved in those controversies, which we have lamented as dividing and deforming the Lutheran church after the death of its founder: but our notice of his writings in that department has been already so far extended into these last years of his life, that we shall have little occasion to return to them. In this his closing stage we find him, from the change of circumstances produced by the peace now established, less engaged than formerly in public negotiations in the cause of religion. Still however he was not without employment of that kind. In 1555

he went to Nuremberg, accompanied by Aless (a Scotch divine, settled in Germany,) and Camerarius, for the purpose of endeavouring to heal the divisions which had been occasioned in that city by the dogmas of Osiander; and his exertions were crowned with success. He comprised in a clear and pacific paper, in which no censure was passed upon any individual, the doctrines to be approved or disapproved on the points at issue; and this paper he submitted to the clergy of the place, begging them freely to canvass it, that they might, if possible, come to agreement upon it, and then, "by common consent, exhibit an instance of that unanimity which the Son of God had so ardently prayed for on behalf of his church." The proceeding had the happiest issue, in the restoration of peace among the pastors and religious communities of that city.

In the year 1557 the vain attempt was once more renewed, by a public conference held at Worms, under the presidency of Julius Pflug, to reconcile the existing religious differences of the protestants and Roman catholics; and Melancthon was deputed to the meeting by Augustus elector of Saxony. But the conference was soon terminated by the Romanists' first demanding, as a measure preliminary to the discussion of any form of concord, that all Zwinglians, Osiandrists, and Flacians should be condemned by name; and the deputies from the princes of Saxe-Weimar (the sons of John Frederic) requiring that all adiaphorists, synergists, Majorists, (terms applied to Melancthon and his friends,) and others of a like description, should be included with the Zwinglians in this condemnation. It was probably the design of the papists by their proposal to divide the protestants; an object in which the deputies from Weimar, who were favourable to Flacius, unwittingly seconded them. Hence no point appears to have come under discussion in this conference, beyond the great principle of the rule of judgment—which

Melancthon and his friends, of course, maintained to be the scriptures alone.

In an interval of this conference, while a deputation was sent to king Ferdinand to learn his pleasure concerning the course of procedure, Melancthon accepted an invitation from Otho Henry elector Palatine, to visit Heidelberg, in order to arrange a plan for the conduct of the university now established there. While at this place, he received the melancholy intelligence of the death of his wife, with whom he had lived in harmony and happiness for thirty-seven years. His friend Camerarius came over to Heidelberg to communicate the painful tidings to him; which he did while they were together in the elector's gardens. The good man, as one wearied with the struggles of life, and anticipating his own departure, though much affected at the intelligence, made scarcely any other remark at the time than this, "I shall soon follow her."

The next year, he again maintained the protestant cause against Staphylus and Avius, the former of whom was an apostate from Lutheranism—once the pupil and disciple, and afterwards the malignant enemy of Melancthon.—Besides his writings,—which, we are told, were chiefly the product of early morning hours—Melancthon still persevered in his indefatigable labours as a professor in the university; in which character he had been accustomed to deliver two, and often three, or even four lectures in the day. His last lecture, in which he explained part of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, was given April 12, 1560. He had been previously at Leipzig, attending an annual examination of the students of the university, and had taken cold on his return. Intermitting fever now came on. He still however continued to write; and he wished again to lecture on the 14th of April, but was prevented by his friend Camerarius, who had come from Leipzig to visit him, on account of his illness. With him he discoursed

on the words of the apostle, "Having a desire to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better." On the 18th day of the month he attempted to write out his will afresh, but was unable to finish it. In what he did put down however he observed, that "he wished to have what he had written in opposition to the papists, anabaptists, Flacians, and others in his reply to the Bavarian Articles,¹ considered as the confession of his faith." The next day, about six o'clock in the evening he expired in peace, offering up prayers and expressing kind wishes for all about him. He was sixty-three years of age, during forty-two of which he had been connected with the university of Wittemberg. On the twenty-first of April his remains were honourably interred, near to those of his illustrious friend Luther, in All Saints' church. A short time before his death, he wrote, in parallel columns, a fragment of reasons why we ought not to be unwilling to die. They are apparently addressed to himself.

"On the one hand—

You shall depart from your sins.

You shall be released from troubles, and from the fierce contentions of polemics.

"On the other hand—

You shall come into the light.

You shall see God.

You shall behold the Son of God.

You shall learn those hidden mysteries which you could not in this life comprehend—Why we are in our present condition—What is the union of the two natures in the person of Christ."

We add the following particulars from a second life of him inserted by Melchior Adam in his biography of philosophers, in addition to that which he had given in his biography of divines.

"He frequently in his latter years, and particularly in the last months of his life, bewailed with many tears the discords of the reformed churches,

¹ See below, p. 367.

and implored in ardent prayers that God would heal these divisions. This subject seemed to be perpetually in his heart and on his tongue.—When his friend and physician Winsheim visited him, and expressed his fears, that with his feeble and reduced frame he would ill sustain the attacks of his disease, he replied, with a smile, ‘I desire to depart, and to be with Christ.’—To Peucer, his son-in-law, he said the day before his death: ‘My illness does not disturb me: I have no anxiety or matter of care but one—that the churches may be at peace in Christ Jesus.’—He frequently before his death repeated the Saviour’s prayer, ‘That they may be one in us, as we also are one:’ and frequently this sentence of S. Paul, ‘Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.’—A little time before he expired, Eber, chief pastor of Wittemberg, reciting to him the words, ‘As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God;’ he raised his hands and eyes, and said, ‘That sentence is ever in my thoughts!’—His son-in-law having asked if he wished for any thing, he said, ‘Nothing but heaven;’ and begged that he might not be disturbed. At the close, as long as he could articulate, he repeated the words, ‘O God, compassionate me through thy Son Jesus Christ!’ and again, ‘In thee, O Lord, have I trusted, let me never be confounded!’—His faculties were clear to the last, and his decease literally resembled a falling asleep.”

Thus lived, thus taught, and thus died the man of whom Bossuet,¹ in concluding the notice which he thinks proper to take of him, can find nothing better, nor any thing more correct to say, than what is contained in the following sentence: “He was respected, as appeared, by the church of Wittemberg, but the grievous restraints he lay under, and the measures he was forced to follow, prevented his speaking all he

¹ The Roman-catholic bishop of Meaux.

thought; and in this state he ended his miserable life, in 1560!"

Melancthon is a character with whom it is impossible to become conversant without being in danger of contracting for him even an excessive partiality. I have felt that I was exposed to this bias in writing of him: and I am aware that I have made a more favourable representation of his course, and of the ground that he occupied after the death of Luther, than is generally received: but I desire to have my statements admitted no further than they are drawn from authentic sources. I have endeavoured to trace, not from the fallacious reports of others concerning him, but from his own papers, what part he actually took in the controversies respecting the Interim, and the adiaphoristic points—which I cannot but feel confident has not been done by many who have censured him: and thus I trust I have satisfactorily vindicated him from numerous charges of pusillanimity, and unworthy concession and compromise; and have shewn that, in some of the most important cases, he was even heroically firm, where the very contrary has been imputed to him. I cannot but suppose that many, who have given currency to disadvantageous accounts of his conduct, have not had recourse to his own writings, or to other original documents: they rather seem, having heard the charges of his opponents, and considered his reputed character, to have inferred how it was *likely* that a man of his temper should act, than to have inquired how he really *did* act. Thus to apportion praise or blame upon speculative grounds, and not upon an actual examination of facts, it is to be feared, is not uncommon even with historians of reputation.—My impression is, that the fault of Melancthon's character was not, as it is commonly supposed to have been, timidity, at least in the sense of a hesitation to avow his sentiments, or a dread of personal danger—for many facts demonstrate his bold disregard even of life itself in the

cause which he had undertaken; but rather a morbid fear of deciding amiss; a fastidiousness which could never satisfy itself; together with such an excessive, and, considering in whose hands the direction of the affairs of the church is really placed, such a superfluous anxiety for its peace and unity, as sometimes exposed him to the danger of making undue sacrifices for this all but invaluable object. Yet, if any imagine that it was at all a part of his plan to compromise disputed points by the use of ambiguous terms, which each party might construe in its own favour, I can only observe, that there is no practice against which he more frequently and more strongly protests. He was fully aware, that what is thus unsoundly healed breaks out afresh with aggravated virulence. His constant maxim was, "Ambiguous terms only generate new controversies."¹

On the whole, after reading nearly two thousand of his letters, and numerous others of his papers and writings, I confess that I cannot but regard him as affording one of the loveliest specimens of the grace of God, ever exhibited in our fallen nature. It is quite superfluous to speak of his talents, his learning, his taste—they are known and applauded by all. Luther thus broke forth respecting him when he came to Wittemberg a mere stripling: "Philip delivered an oration the fourth day after his arrival replete with learning and elegance, so as to captivate the esteem and admiration of all. We soon turned off our eyes and our thoughts from his stature and appearance, to admire the furniture of his mind." He immediately commenced courses of lectures on Homer, and on S. Paul's epistle to Titus, and then Luther was left

¹ "Historians have applied" the term *timid* to Melancthon "with great incaution." "The hesitation of Melancthon in deciding upon new subjects, or in difficult cases . . . resulted not so much from timidity, as from conscientious scruples of mind. It was not that he feared temporal, but moral consequences." Again: "Those who are solicitous of forming a correct idea of him will rather deem it slanderous than descriptive, to call him the *timid* Melancthon.—Dr. Cox: Life of Mel.

at a loss for words to express his sentiments concerning him. "He has a crowded audience," he says, "and he fires us all, from our first divines to our humblest students, with zeal for the study of Greek." And again: "He is a mere child, if you consider his age, but his acquaintance with all kinds of learning is astonishing." Erasmus also thus wrote concerning him as early as the year 1515: "What hopes may we not conceive of Philip Melancthon? Though yet very young and almost a boy, he is equally to be admired for his proficiency in both languages. What quickness of invention—what purity of diction—what vastness of memory—what variety of reading—what modesty and noble gracefulness of behaviour!"—But that which peculiarly strikes us in reviewing his history is, that this most refined and gentle spirit passed more than forty years—the whole of his mature life—in almost incessant contention against corruptions and corrupters of divine truth, of every description—and that, without ever being either soured by dispute, or reduced to silence by weariness and disgust. Seldom does a sharp expression escape him, at least in any public writing, or in any address to an opponent: yet he was as assiduous, and as ready to take up his weapons to the last, as at any former period of his life. In the words of his son-in-law, Peucer, "Neither odium, danger, trouble, nor ungrateful returns induced him to throw off the burden of the service which God had assigned him, though he often complained that it was heavier than he could well bear."

In now taking leave of his character and history, I propose to furnish the reader with some additional extracts, chiefly from his epistles. In reading over these generally simple and brief effusions, various excellent qualities of his temper and spirit must forcibly strike us: his heavenly-mindedness—his placability—his persevering diligence—his affection

—his anxiety to serve his friends—his zeal for the church of Christ, and for divine truth—as also for the promotion of education and the diffusion of knowledge—and his liberality. Most or all of these, as well as his opinions on several important topics, will receive illustration from the extracts which follow. We will arrange them under some distinct heads.

I. On public affairs, and the peace of the church.

On the approaching war of Smalkald, supposing the question asked, Would he approve it, and instigate his party to it? he wisely and piously answers, “that he would never be the instigator of civil war, even where the cause was just. Let us rather,” he says, “deplore the common calamity: let us teach that the sins of both parties are the cause of it: let us exhort the people to implore Almighty God, with ardent supplications, to send a safe and religious peace: let us entreat those in power to employ their influence for this purpose. All this will be becoming and useful.” Alluding to the pretence made by the emperor’s party, that the war was not waged against the religion of the protestants, he says: “God knows what is really their object. If they are guilty of falsehood in their professed intentions, it is no crime, however it may be a weakness, in us to believe them; and God will punish their deceit.”

The opening of a letter to Paul Rhodius of Stettin, and the other Pomeranian pastors, in which he kindly pleads in behalf of Artopæus, who had been banished from among them for maintaining the dogma of Osiander, but had now softened down or altered his opinion, is striking. “Reverend and dear brethren, No more ardent voice was ever heard in heaven or in earth, than that of the Son of God, pleading, before he suffered, that the Eternal Father would sanctify his church through the truth, and make it one in Him. It is the prayer of the Son of God that the truth may be known, and peace preserved in his church: that there may ever be a portion, at least,

of mankind by whom God may be rightly worshipped. To this prayer of our great High Priest, the Son of God, we join our earnest supplications, that God would preserve truth and peace in your churches, and in our's The churches subsisting among you were organized by Bugenhagen and myself: we have therefore a peculiar desire for their constant peace and purity, that they and we may at length give thanks together for ever in the blessed society of the heavenly world."

A letter to Andrew Musculus, of Francfort on the Oder,¹ displays a fine spirit of frankness, moderation, and charity. On the recommendation of Melancthon, it seems, Musculus had received his doctor's degree: yet, having embraced certain ascetic and it is to be feared self-righteous notions, he was now condemning the whole body of the Lutheran divines, for not inculcating fasting, to the extent of abstinence from food for two or three days together. On such grounds he ventured to affirm, "that among them men were not instructed in the doctrine of repentance." Nay, he even pronounced them, in certain respects, "worse than idolaters." Melancthon mildly combats the errors of Musculus; observes concerning his severe sentences, "To say the least, you pronounce too harshly;" yet still expresses his affection for him; and observes, "I think all teachers of religion, who agree in their main doctrines, ought to be friends, though they may not express themselves in the same way in explaining particular points. . . . I am not so bigoted and selfish that I can allow no one to differ from me."

In two distinct letters to our Cranmer, in the year 1548, he highly approves the primate's purpose of drawing up articles of religion, and urges him to execute his design with all possible exactness, using the advice of the ablest men, who should in the end

¹ Not to be confounded with the well-known Wolfgang Musculus of Augsburg, afterwards of Berne.

sanction what was agreed upon with their signatures. "Nothing," he says, "can be more important than a measure of this kind, which will produce a noble testimony to the true doctrine, in the sight of all nations, and hand it down to posterity as a rule which they may follow. Such a confession of faith, prepared among you, will not differ much from our's. There are a few points however on which I could wish it to be a little more explicit, for fear that ambiguous expressions should give occasion to fresh disputes."—He then adverts to the proceedings of the emperor respecting the Interim: "He is forming a scheme for the termination of our controversies, which he may perhaps publish: but, as his plan is to unite the parties by the use of general terms, to which neither can object, [but which determine nothing,] he will only excite further contentions. At the same time, he will confirm existing abuses. In the church we should by all means call things by their true names: by any other means we only throw in the apple of discord among the guests. If among us unanimity had existed in the churches, we should not have been exposed to our present calamities. By all means therefore pursue your intention. If you ask my opinion and concurrence, I will most readily both give my own sentiments, with the grounds of them, and listen to those of others—men of learning and piety. May truth and the glory of God, and the good of the church, and not any private affections, evermore prevail!"

What he thus writes to Cranmer corresponds with the earnest wishes, which he elsewhere repeatedly expresses concerning the protestant churches at large. "Would to God that the state of the times were such, that a number of experienced and learned men might meet and consult together on the doctrines to be maintained!—men who should bring to the discussion, not mutual estrangements, not perverseness, not ignorance, not arrogance, not sophistry, not the

vain desires of contention and victory ; but the fear of God, learning, the love of truth, care to cherish and promote a spirit of prayer, modesty, candour, and kindness one towards another, a readiness to be convinced themselves, as well as a wish to convince others. In such an assembly, while the Word and Son of the eternal Father governed the hearts of all concerned, and the holy scriptures were made the rule of their decisions, something might be happily settled in the churches, both for the present age and for posterity."

II. We will next give some extracts illustrative of his temper in private life, and his sentiments respecting its several relations.

Let not those which he expresses concerning marriage and the female sex be thought unworthy of a place here. Thus he writes to a friend who had just formed this union.—" Stigelius¹ calls the married state 'a divinely appointed school of human life.' The truth and importance of this representation might furnish the theme of a long discourse. The establishment of such an order of things, and the necessity of adhering to it for the well-being of society, attest the government of God, and illustrate his character. The preservation of human society demonstrates the presence of God with us: and those who live holily in wedlock find the proofs of that presence on many trying occasions. This state brings with it the exercise of numerous virtues. That you have determined therefore to comply with this divine appointment is a thing pleasing to God: and I pray him to bestow upon you and your wife all happiness in your union."—To another he expresses himself still more strongly: "I commend your choosing this state of life, and wish you every blessing in it. Married life appears to me a sort of philosophical discipline, training persons to honourable

¹ A professor at Jena, and an elegant Latin poet.

duties, worthy of the good and wise. Few unmarried people are affected as they ought to be towards the public good, and perceive what are really the most important objects in life."

He is much pleased with Pythagoras's remark on the husband's receiving his bride from the altar, as if to remind him, that, like a suppliant who had taken refuge there, she had a religious claim to his protection, and that the deity would avenge his infringement of his duties to her. Then, glancing at an union of which that of marriage is the scriptural emblem, he says—"And such, most strictly, is the character under which the church is led to her husband Christ, as a suppliant" whom he receives into the honourable relation of his spouse.—"Our daughters also," he affectionately and piously remarks, "will be (like suppliants at the altar,) the objects of divine care and protection. 'The generation of the righteous shall be blessed.'" That 'good awaits the children of the pious, of which others have no assurance,' is a sentiment which he often repeats. At this very time, as we shall see, he had painful occasion to recur to such consolations.

Again: "I am quite indignant at those misanthropic beings who think it a proof of wisdom to despise the female sex. Grant that that sex have their weaknesses: we also have our faults. . . . If we have superior force, let us shew it in protecting, not in insulting them. Though many unfeeling spirits may neglect such duties, God demonstrates in his providence a peculiar care of the feebler part of the species. Birds build their nests for their mates and their young: and in like manner cities are fortified, and the labour of governing and defending them is undertaken, for the sake of women and children, rather than of men. As often then as you look upon a house or a city, reflect that both of them were erected for the mothers of our children. And, if God in his providence has made such provision for your wife,

(now in her confinement,) that governments, magistrates, workmen, houses, cities, castles are all subservient to her benefit, do not think it burdensome to bear your part of the common duty, by attending assiduously upon her.—Finally, since marriage presents an image of the love of the Son of God to his church, let the calls made upon you in domestic life remind you, that he has the same care for the church under all her weaknesses, which you now feel for your wife.—For my part I have often thought of composing *a history of heroic women*—women who have endured great afflictions with piety and firmness. The trials of my own family have suggested this to me: for the temper of mind manifested by my dear daughter has been the great alleviation of the bitter grief occasioned me by her calamity. She has ever exhorted me to bear it with greater fortitude; for that it was her determination to submit to the will of God in all that he might see good to lay upon her. May he succour both her, and you, and us all against our adversary the devil, and apply a healing balm to the poisonous bites of the old serpent.”

He often speaks beautifully, and with evident delight, of the affection of parents to their children; considering it as purposely calculated to give us an idea of the regard which God—“the Father of spirits”—bears to us. Thus he writes to one friend, “I doubt not that God will preserve the remnant of his church in these countries; and in that hope you may indulge more heart-felt joy in the birth of your son. I rejoice at the event for your father’s sake—and your father-in-law’s sake—and your own sake; and that you may all, while you kiss the dear infant with parental tenderness, think of the love (στοργή) which God bears towards us.” And to another: “Withdraw your mind as much as possible from painful subjects of reflection, and refresh yourself with the sweets of domestic society: and, when you feel such affection to your children, think that God has im-

pressed this upon us as an image of his own mind towards us." ¹

III. That piety of the writer's mind, which gives so religious a turn to all these subjects, will appear still more conspicuous where the afflictions and death of his friends are concerned.

The death of the excellent Nicholas Hausman,² in the year 1538, seems to have deeply affected both Luther and Melancthon. "Dr. Martin," says Melancthon, "passed the whole of yesterday in tears. I know not what sort of a night has followed so sad a day. He bewails not our departed friend, but the church which has lost so invaluable a pastor.—But let us remember, Hausman is not dead, but is removed from all the troubles of life to immortality. And, though there is reason to grieve for the church, yet Christians must not sink under their grief, but raise and confirm their minds by means of prayer to our Lord Jesus Christ."—And in another letter on the same event he says: "Reflecting on the decease of Hausman, I feel as on the dismissal of friends home from a foreign land to our common native country. Their departure awakens all my own love for that country, and I desire to go with them to those better habitations—to rise to that eternal world of light, where we may enjoy God, at a distance from all sin, and error, and darkness. I beseech you therefore refrain your grief, and think of serving the church committed to your care. In battle, sol-

¹ The last fourteen letters in the second book of Melancthon's published epistles are addressed to a faithful and valued servant, whom he constantly calls, "Charissime Joannes,"—"very dear John." They bear a strong testimony to the excellence of the servant and the kindness of the master. On the death of John, "Melancthon invited the academicians to his funeral, delivered an oration over his grave, and composed an epitaph" in Latin verse for his tombstone, in which he speaks of himself as having

———"in a servant found a friend sincere,
And more than friend, a man of faith and prayer."

² Vol. i. 172, ii. 54.

diers must not let their courage fail because they see their comrades fall around them: but rather succeed to their places. So let us not desert the post assigned us, but pray that God will vouchsafe to be with us."

To his friend Mathesius, on the deformity of his son. "Reverend and dear brother, Often in praying for my daughter, under great distress, I thought parental affection had been implanted in our breasts, to remind us of the love of God towards his only-begotten Son, and towards us. But this affection is especially called forth under afflictive circumstances. I doubt not therefore the grief which you and your dear wife feel for the deformity of your child. Yet Adam, and Eve, and David suffered still severer wounds: and think what anguish pierced the soul of the blessed virgin!—I purpose shortly to publish your discourse: and I mean to weave into it the doctrine of consolation under affliction, and of the distinction between philosophical and evangelical consolation."

To Pfeffinger, on the death of his son. "It is the will of God that we should mourn the loss of those who have been dear to us; and in our grief he approves our piety. In proportion also to the excellence of a man's nature is the strength of his affections. I can conceive therefore the depth of your grief for the loss of your son. And I blame not your feelings; but rather sympathise with them, both for your sake and that of the public. Yet consider, that God has commanded us both to grieve and to moderate our grief. Let us first remember that these events are all ordered by the divine counsel, and that our minds must be bowed into submission to God. Then let us consider, not what *we* have lost, but to what blessedness your excellent son is called away—from what a miserable world, and at what a time. We ought to congratulate him on being advanced to the heavenly society, where he drinks no more, as we do, of pol-

luted streams, but of the pure and inexhaustible fountain of wisdom: where he hears the Son of God, and the prophets and the apostles; and gives thanks to God with ineffable joy. Thinking on such a state, we could wish at once to fly to it, from the comparative dungeon in which we live.—Your grief is increased, perhaps, by reflecting on the genius, the attainments, and the virtues of your son. But this reflection ought rather to assuage your grief. He lived to good purpose while he lived. You saw the evidences of his piety shining forth in his life and in his death—such as demonstrated that eternal life was begun in him, and that his removal hence has been to heavenly bliss. As often as you think of his endowments, give thanks to God, who shewed such favour both to you and to him. A grateful mind will remember its mercies as well as its trials. . . . If you are at any time compelled to spend some months at a distance from your family, amidst rude and unfriendly companions, the thought of returning home alleviates your uneasiness. So now bear your bereavement with moderated feelings, because in a little time you shall go and join your son in that blessed society, and see him adorned with higher honours than he could here receive, and associated with the most glorious companions. There you shall live with him to all eternity, enjoying the vision of God, and the most blessed intercourse with Christ and all his servants. On this state let us fix our eyes during our troublesome sojourn here: let us bear up the more cheerfully, knowing that our course is short, and that we are formed for spending eternity with God, and not for the fleeting gratifications of this life.—May God support you in body and mind—according to that sentence, ‘In him we live, and move, and have our being!’”

To Camerarius, on the death of his brother: “I sincerely loved your brother, not only because I love you, but for the sake of his genius, his goodness, his

weight of character, his moderation of mind, and because, as I saw him relying on God in his troubles, I could not doubt that he was himself beloved of God. I grieve therefore that he is taken from us.—But what do I say, I *loved* him? Nay, I still love him: for he dwells with the Son of God; and with Abraham, and Joseph, and David, and John the Baptist, and St. Paul; and sees *them* face to face who are the judges of the conflicts in which we are engaged.¹ I hope I shall join that blessed company a short time before you do. So far am I from shrinking at the prospect of quitting my imprisonment here, that, as often as I think of the employments of that blessed society, the desire to join them glows within me.... I am no stranger to the contemplation of death. But God would have us not dwell on our miseries, but seek and expect consolation from him, who is *the God of all comfort*, and who dwells with the afflicted—as I have often found, in such a manner as assures me that we are not left to the government of chance.”

To Gerbelius, on the death of his son. “I deeply sympathise with you, and should gladly comfort you: but all other topics than those which the divine word furnishes are frigid and empty. Among those of an availing kind one is, that God has repeatedly taught us, that his church must bear the cross, and the reasons why it must do so. He has exercised the great luminaries of his church, and above them all their great Head, his beloved Son, with severe sufferings. As therefore we know the will of God, and are assured what the issue shall be, we must do as St. Peter charges us, ‘humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God’—that mighty hand which not only subverts prosperity, but also wonderfully supports and delivers his people in adversity, beyond their expectation. Let us obey God therefore, and

¹ Heb. xii. 1.

‘not faint when we are rebuked of him.’—I have been frequently called to mourn the death of beloved friends within the last two years. I lately lost my sister, and my sister-in-law, my brother’s wife: also Capito, and Grynæus, and his son. I could recount a longer catalogue than I could well bear to review, were I not convinced that we must submit to God; and likewise that my departed friends are not lost, but still contemplate, with far higher advantage and delight, those truths which we imperfectly discussed together in this state of comparative darkness.—Think thus, my friend, that you shall again embrace your departed wives and children: that you shall conduct your son through the glorious company of the prophets and apostles, and recall to his mind what you taught him concerning them, and hear the doubtful points of their respective histories cleared up by themselves in person. You shall hear the Son of God himself speaking to you. You shall see your sainted wives conversing with Eve, and Sarah, and other holy women of old times. As often as I indulge these reflections, I feel the ardent desire of mingling with the blessed company. You remember Socrates says, that nothing could be more delightful to him, if the souls of men really live hereafter, than to depart out of this life, and to join Palamedes and other sages, and to learn from them the things of which he was here left in doubt. If to him the thought of death was alleviated by that obscure and uncertain hope, how ought we to be affected, who assuredly know that we are formed for the presence of God himself, and that by his Son, our great High Priest, our forfeited inheritance is restored to us?—I have not written to instruct you; but because I hoped the converse of a friend might at such a time be soothing to you.—Farewell.”

The affliction which Melancthon himself suffered on account of a beloved daughter has been repeatedly

referred to: and with some more distinct notice of her history we will close these extracts relative to cases of suffering and sorrow.

Melancthon had two sons and two daughters. Concerning the sons I find nothing recorded, and they probably died in early life. The younger daughter was married to Caspar Peucer, a man of great eminence as a physician, a scholar, and a philosopher. He was also a zealous labourer and a great sufferer in the same cause with his father-in-law: being much persecuted by the divines of Jena and Weimar, and subjected by the elector Augustus to a very severe imprisonment of ten years' continuance, chiefly on the ground of his having renounced Luther's doctrine of the corporal presence in the eucharist. The elder daughter was an elegant and accomplished young woman, who reflected the image of her father's mind, and was a great favourite with him. She was married at a very early age to George Sabinus, a pupil of her father's, not unworthy of his master, as far as intellectual endowments were concerned, but a stranger to his meekness and moderation of mind. Sabinus, early flattered by the attentions paid him by the great and the learned both in Germany and Italy, cherished ambitious aims, and in consequence expected services from his father-in-law in promoting his advancement, which it was neither in Melancthon's power, nor agreeable to his views, to render. Disappointed of his hopes in this respect, he removed, in the year 1544, much against Melancthon's wishes, into Prussia, to take the superintendence of the new academical institution which Albert of Brandenburg was then forming at Königsberg. This proved a final removal of his wife from her father's presence. She seems to have been by no means kindly treated by her husband, and she died three years afterwards at her new place of residence, leaving behind her three daughters and an infant son. These occurrences inflicted a deep wound on

the tender heart of Melancthon. He however not only took on himself the charge of his grandchildren's education, but behaved with great kindness to Sabinus. The latter returned from Prussia in 1553, and settled at Francfort on the Oder; and he is spoken of as spending his remaining days usefully and piously, and ending them in a manner becoming a sincere Christian.

The following are extracts from Melancthon's letters relative to these affairs.

"Sabinus aims to get to court. This is his object. Perhaps he is not disinclined to remove my daughter to a greater distance from me. But I check myself: I commend her to God. I reflect how the mother of John the Baptist, and Mary the mother of our Lord, and many other pious women were preserved; and that at a time when Syria was overrun by Parthian, Roman, and Herodian troops.... I remember once when she was ill, in her infancy, to have found my mind suddenly and effectually cheered under my anxieties about her, by the simple reflection, She is the object of the divine care! Though I grieve to have my daughter removed so far from me, yet, amid so many public miseries, I must bear this private affliction with submission. The thought of her virtues often soothes my sadness. I commend her to God!"—He then relates a little incident of her early years, which had made a lasting impression on his memory and his heart. "I was holding her in my arms in the morning, when she had only her nightgown on. She observed tears stealing down my cheeks, and she took up her skirt and wiped them away. This little action of her's so penetrated my soul, that I could not but think it significant."

Again: "So the mother, with her two little girls, follows her husband, full of sadness, and anticipating miscarriage and death as the consequence. May God avert it! I pray the Son of God, who hath said, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy

laden, and I will give you rest,' to guard and direct her....The whole proceeding is strange.—But I am now drawing up for him (Sabinus) a scheme for the regulation of the university."

On receiving the sad tidings of his daughter's death in 1547, he wrote the following letter to her husband.—“ I doubt not you yourself feel that the force of paternal affection is great. You will readily believe me then, when I say that I loved my daughter Ann most dearly. Having therefore formed a high opinion of you from your abilities as a writer, as did also many other competent judges, I willingly gave her to you, praying that the connexion might be happy and prosperous. As however we are taught by the heavenly doctrine what are the causes and the remedies of human afflictions, let us endeavour wisely to receive what has now befallen us. Though I am in the deepest distress for my daughter's death, and because it took place when she was far removed from her parent's embraces, and when I had no opportunity of conversing with her on the most important topics, yet I keep before my mind those consolations which God has graciously provided for us. Among these the chief is, that my dear daughter previously exhibited sure signs of love to God: on which ground I trust that she now enjoys his blessed presence, and that of his Son our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom I often commended her with tears: and in that presence it is my hope ere long to embrace her again.—But now I wish that our friendship should remain unbroken: and I will do all in my power to preserve it. Your children I account as my own. They are mine: and I love them as I loved their mother. She was devoted to her children: and I wish to catch her feelings towards them. I not only advise you, but I earnestly entreat you, to send the little girls to me—one or both of them. They shall be faithfully and tenderly trained up in the knowledge of God, and in becoming duties, as their sister is. Her letters

to you will be a proof of her progress. Little Albert, I take for granted, is committed to a trusty nurse. May God preserve him!...The dangers of the war do not at all prevent my wishing to see all my family gathered round me. God in his mercy has protected us hitherto, and he will, I trust, yet preserve us; and, if circumstances require, I will not neglect to place those about me in a situation of greater security. But let me know what you resolve to do respecting your daughters."

This letter indicates a mind full of affection, but, I think, in some degree, adjusting itself to the less ardent sensibilities of its correspondent. Some sentences, addressed to confidential friends, depict in a more vivid manner the depth of the writer's grief. To Eber he says, "I send you the account of my daughter's death, the reading of which so aggravates my grief that I fear its effects on my health. I have before my eyes her gesture, when, on being asked what she would have said to her parents, she replied only by tears; and it awakens recollections which harrow up my feelings. But I recur to the consolations which God has proposed to us.—Compassion for my son-in-law also now effaces from my mind the remembrance of past offences." In a subsequent letter he says again: "That silence of my daughter—those tears have inflicted an incurable wound on my heart." Yet, he adds, "my grief for our public calamities¹ even surpasses that which I feel for my domestic affliction."—To Cruciger he writes: "I loved my daughter with that affection which God has implanted in our nature, and that, quickened by the thought of the sad situation to which she was reduced—especially as it threw her virtues into shade. Her premature death being now added to the calamity, my grief is deep. I blame my own negligence for having thrown her into such circumstances. Yet,

¹ Probably this was written just at the period of the battle of Muhlberg. His daughter died Feb. 26, 1547.

since for ten years together¹ I daily commended her to God with many tears, and the care of God for her was strikingly discovered to me, I judge that he has removed her out of life in order to relieve her from her troubles: and this thought in some degree reconciles my mind. I give thanks therefore to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, that he hath heard my prayers, and called her to a better state."

IV. We may, lastly, here collect together a few brief miscellaneous notices.

Of the indefatigable *diligence* of this spare, feeble, delicate man, for between forty and fifty successive years, in incessant lecturing; in writing upon almost every branch of science and literature, and indeed upon all sorts of subjects human and divine; in corresponding with persons of all ranks and in various countries; in maintaining the most harassing conferences and disputations; and in journeying to settle churches and regulate universities; it must be superfluous to speak.² We will only add a sentence or two from his letters, expressive of his determination to persevere under all circumstances.

To prince George of Anhalt he writes: "As it is said in the Psalm, 'I will sing praise to my God as long as I have my being,' so let us, while time is allowed us, faithfully spread the gospel, whether states and empires be at peace or under disturbance." Again: "I will serve the church by teaching necessary truths, with modesty and moderation, so long as God shall give me leave. The conflicts of empires and of factions are nothing to men of our class." Yet again: "I form no schemes, I have no private objects to aim at, I fortify myself with no factious adherents; (though, if I chose this, the means would not be wanting;) but, in my proper place, I teach

¹ From the period of her marriage, in 1536.

² It may be observed, that among the labours of Melancthon I have not enumerated preaching or pastoral duties. The fact is, I discover no proof of his ever having taken orders as a clergyman.

good learning, serviceable to the public; and now also, in my old age, prepare for death, which cannot be far off: and I pray the Son of God to make me 'a vessel of mercy!' Let others seek for power and preeminence: I have nothing to do with such things. The Son of God will judge of my course and of my intentions. He knows my desire to be, that truth may be brought to light, the glory of God set forth, and his church appear in her beauty. With this consciousness I live, and commit myself to God. I know that I am a man and a miserable sinner: but I hope that many wise and good men can bear testimony to my aims and my labours, in the cause to which I have devoted myself."—To Spalatinus: "This is the object I propose to myself—the scope and end of my philosophy. You remember the wise saying of the elector Frederic—*What we can!* Let us adopt it. Let us serve the public as far as we can, and expect our protection, our favour, and our reward from God. Human rewards are nothing."

His *zeal for the instruction of youth*, and in recommending promising young men to patronage, and to useful situations, are prominent points in all his correspondence. "As long as I live," he says, "I will labour to bring forward what may be serviceable to youth." And again: "I am delighted with the verse of Epicharmus; for I think it a greater honour to be useful to children, than 'to capture Troy.'" And hence he deliberately preferred publishing a series of treatises, in which, among other things, almost all the sciences were first reduced to order, from the miserable confusion in which they had been involved, to perfecting a small number of works which might have more exalted his own literary reputation.

His *humility* often shines forth very pleasingly, and without ostentation. "My errors," he says, "and the errors of many other persons concerned, have been numerous: nor could things of such importance

be recovered from the dark chaos in which they were sunk, without many mistakes being committed.”—“I wish neither to rely on my own counsels, nor to introduce novelties, nor to contend for things not necessary.”—“Let others boast themselves self-taught: I freely confess, that I am daily indebted to many persons for instruction in numerous particulars. *To be single-handed is to be weak.*”

His *liberality* and *disinterestedness* must not be passed over. Camerarius writes of Melancthon's wife, “She was a most assiduous mistress of a family, liberal and beneficent to all, and so attentive to the poor, that, both in giving to all without distinction, and in making applications to others on their behalf, she seemed sometimes to exceed due bounds.” Moderate as were his means, Melancthon's house appears to have been open to all comers, who took any interest in the cause of religion or learning: and he did not scruple to do much to support, as well as gratuitously to instruct, poor students of promising talents and character.—At the time when he was a wanderer from home on account of the war, he thus writes to a fellow-sufferer: “With respect to pecuniary matters, God will provide. What I have left, you shall share with me.” And again: “Though the war is ruinous to my finances, yet, if you have need to take any thing of your friends, take it of *me*. As long as any part of my property remains we will hold it in common.”—We may perhaps think this excessive: but certainly it is noble. Surely also it is Christian; and, when such conduct is adopted upon genuine principles of faith in God and love to man, no one will suffer by it. We hear of no material inconvenience which accrued to either Melancthon or his family, by this disposition to share his property with the poor and with his friends.—Yet, with respect to his stipend from the university, which was I apprehend his main support, it would appear from a conversation related

to have passed between Sabinus, afterwards his son-in-law, and cardinal Bembo, in Italy, that it did not exceed three hundred florins, or about seventy pounds a-year: and we have before seen that he hesitated to receive an addition to it. Maurice also, when advanced to the electorate, could not, even on trial, induce him to ask, and scarcely to accept any thing from him.—We had occasion to observe a like spirit in Luther: and I may add, that, in perusing their memoirs, it has struck me as a quality common to most of the eminent men, who were made the instruments of so great a work at the period of the reformation. Yes, and those, who would aspire to be employed with success on such high and holy services, must become detached more than even good men generally now are from the interests of this life. Alas, we are too calculating—too *commercial*—too much given to contrive the means of acquiring a good provision, and of maintaining a handsome style of living. This was never the spirit which wrought great things in the church of God. Let us beware lest we fall under the sentence, though perhaps in a somewhat varied sense, “Ye have your reward”—in improved circumstances, but in blighted labours!

The *devout spirit* of Melancthon has sufficiently appeared: but we may add the two following short specimens of the sort of sentiments which abound in his correspondence. “Amid these disorders may the Son of God protect us! When he formed such an alliance with the human race as to take our nature upon him, he gave an irrefragable proof of his real regard for us. Oh amazing, that the divine nature should so abase itself! Oh more than iron-hardness of the human heart, to be so little affected with such a fact!”—“In all ages the church has been subject to exile; to remind us, I think, that we have lost our proper native country, and that we are to be led back to it by the Son of God, for this purpose living in exile among us. But, as God bears a regard to us

in our banishment, so would he have all pious persons relieve the sorrows of their fellow-exiles."

Among the works of Melancthon, it may not be superfluous here to take some notice of his "Common Places," or brief discussions of the principal topics of theology: which have excited extraordinary attention, and furnish a very interesting article of literary and theological history.

From its very first publication, in the year 1521, (when its author was only twenty-four years of age,) this work obtained a high degree of celebrity. Luther spoke of it as "invincible, worthy not only of immortality, but of being sanctioned by a canon of the church:" pronounced it far superior to any writings of his own—"the best book in the world next to the Bible;" and one which, thoroughly digested, was sufficient, with the holy scriptures, to make an accomplished divine. In his controversy with Erasmus, he told that learned writer, that it had, by anticipation, "ground all the arguments of his Diatribè to powder:" and he continued to speak of it in the same strain to the end of his days. Erasmus also highly commended it: while Cochlæus, the virulent opponent of Luther, denounced it as "a most pestilent monster, big with ruin to the church." To an edition published in French, at Geneva, in the year 1551, Calvin prefixed an advertisement, in which he "eulogizes the author in the strongest terms," and says of the Common Places in particular, The work is "a summary of those truths which are essential to a Christian's guidance in the way of salvation." In numerous theological schools no other text-book was used for the lectures delivered to the students: and in Misnia and Pomerania it was clothed with the authority of a symbolical book. It spread even into Italy, and was well received at Rome itself, till it was discovered that the name of the author to whom it was ascribed, "Messer Ippofilo da Terra Negra"

was no other than a translation of the words "Philip Melancthon;"¹ on which the copies were ordered to be burned. No less than ninety-nine editions have been enumerated, (sixty-seven in the original Latin, and thirty-two in different modern languages,) which were printed at various places within seventy-four years from its first appearance; sixteen or seventeen of them being between the years 1521 and 1525: and we may be sure that where the demand was so great the impressions would not be small.

But other circumstances besides those already mentioned render the history of this work curious and interesting. Not only were various new topics introduced in the course of its progress, and the volume, at first no more than a small duodecimo of two hundred and fifty pages, swelled to nearly four times its original size; but, on certain important points, changes were made, which attracted great attention at the time; have been made the subject of much investigation since; and furnish a very striking instance, how much increasing experience, study, and prayer teach a wise and good man modesty, and may very probably moderate his sentiments upon high points, on which he might at first be disposed to dogmatize. So much curiosity has this subject excited among the learned, that, after more than one volume had been produced upon it, Brucker, the learned author of the *History of Philosophy*, expressed his wish that some competent writer would give a complete history of the work; a wish which we are told has been fully satisfied in a German treatise by Strobelius, pastor of Woehrden² author of *Melancthoniana*, and other esteemed works, and editor of *Camerarius's Life of Melancthon*.

It appears that after Melancthon's work had been about four years before the public, its author, in

¹ *Melancthon* is Greek for his proper name *Schwartzerd*, which means *black earth*.

² Nuremberg, 1776, 1782.

1525, as far as his influence extended, restrained its publication; and it was no more reprinted, at least in the original Latin, till 1535, when he brought it out afresh, doubled in size, and considerably changed. Edition again rapidly succeeded edition of the book in this form, till the year 1543, when it appeared a second time remodeled, and again nearly doubled in size.

We have therefore, in fact, three distinct series of editions, those from 1521 to 1525, those from 1535 to 1542 inclusive, and those subsequent to the last of these dates. On account of the extreme rarity of the early editions, (which made Hutter, a learned author who died so far back as the year 1616, complain that they were inaccessible to him,) and from their being much sought after, as exhibiting the earliest complete monument of the original doctrine of the reformers, Herman Von der Hadt was induced to reprint the first edition verbatim in his Literary History, Francfort, 1717; and from that copy it has been again reprinted by professor Augusti, at Leipzig 1821. The most material variations are between the first and second series of editions: those between the second and third being made rather by addition than by alteration. The changes which Melancthon made by no means gave satisfaction to all his friends, and particularly to many of the divines who took a leading part in the protestant church after the death of Luther. These latter in consequence asserted, that that reformer's commendations of the work referred only to the earlier editions, and that he disapproved the alterations made in it, though, for the sake of not disturbing the peace of the church, he did not publicly censure them. This however, according to Augusti, has been amply disproved; and indeed its incorrectness might be pretty decisively inferred from what has appeared in this history. It was in 1543, eight years after the *principal* changes had taken place, and when the editions

of twenty years' previous date were no doubt of comparatively rare occurrence, that Luther commended the work, without any qualification, to his Italian correspondents;¹ and it was in 1545, two years after the *last* important alterations had been made, that he eulogized it in the same unqualified manner, in the preface to the first volume of his own collected works.²

It will not be to our purpose in this place to enter into the particulars of the changes made by Melancthon in his work as time advanced.³ Suffice it to observe that in the early editions he taught the highest predestinarian and necessitarian doctrines, denying not only *free will*, as we all deny it,⁴ in the theological sense of the term, but *free agency* itself, and that upon principles which withhold it from all creatures, simply as such, and not merely from fallen beings. But in the later editions all this is withdrawn or revoked; and on some points the author has rather deviated into an opposite extreme. On the whole however these subjects are treated with great wisdom and moderation; and it is clear that, however he may have receded from the high speculative ground which he formerly occupied, he has not weakened his statements of a practical doctrine like that of human depravity, or of the necessity of divine grace to our recovery. Dr. Milner's positions will here fully hold good—that Melancthon never materially altered his sentiments “on the bondage of the will, or, *what is the very same thing, on the propensity of human nature to evil* :” and again, that “in the grand Christian article of original sin, and the total inability of man, and the necessity of the renovating grace of Christ, Melancthon was as

¹ Above, p. 142.

² Above, p. 252.

³ This is done, and much matter introduced which I hope may be valuable to the theological student, in *Continuation of Milner*, ii. p. 182—253.

⁴ Church Art. x.

sound and as steady as Luther himself; though perhaps he did not on all occasions grasp his objects with the force and the distinctness of his master."

One of the latest of Melancthon's compositions may also be adverted to, especially as he styled it "his last will," and desired to have it considered as his closing "confession of faith."¹ I refer to his "Answers to the impious Articles of the Bavarian Inquisition," or Inquisitors, written in August, 1559. The articles referred to were thirty-one in number; all drawn up in the form of questions; which, from their nature, would appear to have been designed to detect, by tests both affirmative and negative, the most latent infection of Lutheran principles: and they are signed by five "Examiners." On Melancthon's replies to them we may remark, 1. That he no where shews a more determined hostility to popish errors, or a deeper sense of their enormity, than in this his last publication: 2. That he teaches precisely the same doctrine concerning the will as in the later editions of his Common Places: and 3. That he is as clear and determinate as ever on the great subject of justification, and on its being by faith alone, "that is, by reliance on the Mediator." "They," he says, "who reject the exclusive word, *only*, slide into the synecdoche of Origen or the papists."²—He earnestly recommends "that modesty of mind which would humbly adhere to revealed truths, though it could not answer all the cavils raised against them."

To this account of Melancthon we subjoin, in conclusion, a brief notice of several of the more eminent promoters of the reformation in Germany who closed their earthly career about the period that has past under review, particularly from the death of Luther.

¹ Above, p. 339.

² See above, p. 330.

Luther's early and faithful friend, Spalatinus, chaplain to the elector of Saxony, died in January, 1545, a year before the reformer, at the age of sixty-three. He was subject to depression of spirits, and dejection in his work; but by the wise and friendly admonitions of Luther, he was kept in his post, and in the discharge of his duties to the end of his life. Luther told him: "The desire you have to quit your post is a mere temptation. I consider it as a certain sign of your ministry being acceptable to God that you are thus tempted. If it were otherwise, you would not deplore your own unfruitfulness; you would rather bustle and seek to please men, as those do who talk much, though they were never sent with a commission to preach the gospel."

The death of Frederic Myconius, for twenty-two years pastor and superintendent of Saxe-Gotha, took place about six weeks after that of Luther. He died at the age of fifty-five.

John Hesse, the excellent pastor of Breslaw, died the next year, 1547, aged sixty, and was succeeded by Aurifaber. His colleague Ambrose Moiban survived him seven years.

Of Caspar Cruciger we may give a somewhat more detailed account. He was a native of Leipzig, and studied at Wittenberg. He afterwards presided for some years over the school at Magdeburg. In 1527 he was called to Wittenberg, to fill the offices of a preacher in one of the churches, and a lecturer in the university; and he continued there the remainder of his life—being rector of the university from the year 1546 to 1548. Possessing great skill in the Hebrew language, he assisted Luther in his translation of the scriptures. He was held in great esteem by that reformer: and after Luther's death, Melancthon had scarcely a more valued adviser and coadjutor. Joachim Camerarius, who had been his fellow-student under George Heltus, preceptor to George prince of Anhalt, speaks in terms of the highest admi-

ration of his erudition, prudence, piety, and amiable manners. His learning was almost universal; and he was particularly distinguished for the rapidity of his penmanship. When he acted as secretary at the conference of Worms, in the year 1540, Granvelle, the emperor's minister, remarked of him, "The Lutherans have a scribe who possesses more learning than all the men of the opposite party." He greatly delighted in the study of nature, and in tracing God in his works. He died in 1548, at the age of only forty-five years—worn down with studies, labours, and anxious cares for the church. "He departed out of life," says Camerarius, "offering ardent prayers for himself, and for all who in common with him were in jeopardy for religion's sake, and committing his soul to the hands of Jesus Christ, whom he had devoutly worshipped, and in all his studies faithfully served." Melchior Adam is somewhat more particular. "He lay," says this collector, "three months without hope of recovery, displaying unfailing faith, patience, and piety. Not even then did he intermit his studies, but filled up his time with useful employments, to the utmost that his strength would bear. In the morning he had his little daughters called to him, and heard them repeat their prayers, intermingling with them his own sighs, tears, and supplications, for the church of Christ, for himself, and for his children. 'O Lord,' he prayed, 'pardon my sins, for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son, who was crucified for us, and raised from the dead: sanctify me by thy Holy Spirit: preserve in these countries the remnant of thy church, and suffer not the light of thy gospel to be extinguished. Make these my orphans vessels of mercy! I call upon thee in faith, though it be weak and languid. O Lord Jesu Christ, Son of God, I believe thy promise, which thou hast sealed with thy death and resurrection. Assist me: raise and cheer my heart with faith!' He frequently, on these occasions, repeated

words to this effect; and afterwards, having pressed upon his children some pious instructions, he dismissed them. He then applied himself to various studies, mathematical and philological, as well as theological. He discoursed also largely with his friends on various interesting topics. At length, with a peaceful mind, and in the midst of his prayers, he slept in the Lord, November 16, 1548, and was honourably buried in the church at Wittenberg."

The next year died Vitus Theodorus, or Theodore Veit, one of Luther's companions at Coburg,¹ at the period of the diet of Augsburg. He was a native of Nuremberg, and exercised his ministry in that city with great acceptance, for many years previous to his death. He was there much annoyed by the public insults of Osiander: but, by Melancthon's advice, he was "as a deaf man that heard them not;" and thus they failed of their effect.

John Spangenberg,² the pious superintendent of Mansfeldt, died in the year 1550, at the age of sixty-six.

Bucer and Paul Fagius had removed from Strasburg into England, on the invitation of archbishop Cranmer, in consequence of the dangers incurred by their opposition to the Interim; and they died there, the latter in November 1550, the former in February 1551. Bucer was in his sixty-first year; Fagius only in his forty-fifth.

The death of Bucer was the next year followed by that of Caspar Hedio, who had long been his fellow-labourer at Strasburg, and of Herman Tast the reformer of Holstein.

The year 1553 removed prince George of Anhalt, John Æpinus, pastor and superintendent of Hamburg, and James Sturmius of Strasburg. Of the first a particular account has been given: the last, as a layman, taking a leading part in public affairs, rendered

¹ Above, p. 32.

² Above, p. 245.

great service to the cause of the reformation. He filled the office of senator, and repeatedly that of mayor, in his native city, and was deputed, it is said, as its representative in diets of the empire and on other embassies, not less than ninety times; on all which occasions he displayed such firmness, wisdom, and eloquence, that he gained the highest reputation and influence. He was one of those who first acquired the name of *protestants*, at Spires in 1529: he acted a prominent part in the diet of Augsburg, in the year following: and in 1532 he came as ambassador into England, on important business. It was by his influence that the public school at Strasburg was founded, over which his brother John Sturmius presided; and that stipends were appointed to encourage men of learning to settle in the city. He was deputed again to the emperor, on embassies for the preservation of peace and the protestant religion, at Ratisbon in 1541, Spires 1544, and Worms 1545: and it was chiefly under his guidance that his citizens made the firm and honourable stand which has been related, when the Interim was established, in 1548. To him also we may be said to owe the valuable history of Sleidan, as he prompted the author to undertake that work, and gave him access to many of the original documents necessary to its execution. He was held in high estimation by Melancthon, who consulted with him on all affairs of importance. He died October 30, 1553, at the age of sixty-four years.

The next person whose death is to be noticed, is Justus Jonas, who had been the fellow-labourer of Luther, from an early period. We have seen that he removed from Wittemberg to Halle in Saxony, in 1541, and thence, in consequence of the Smalkaldic war, (after which he attached himself to the sons of John Frederic,) into the dutchy of Coburg; where he was made rector of Eisfeldt, and superintendent of the churches of the dutchy. He died there in 1555, aged sixty-three years. On his death-bed, this ex-

cellent man is said to have suffered great mental depression, but to have been roused from it by the consolations, not unmingled with reproofs, suggested by his own servant.

Martin Frecht, one of those ministers whom the emperor had led away in chains from Ulm, for his opposition to the Interim, and John Forster of Wittemberg, a skilful Hebraist, who had rendered valuable assistance to Luther in his expositions of scripture, died in 1556. The former, on recovering his liberty, had settled at Tübingen, under the duke of Würtemberg.

The distinguished chancellor of Saxony, Gregory Pontanus, died at Jena, in 1557, at the age of 70, having settled there under the sons of the late elector.

Bugenhagen, Justus Menius, and Erhard Schnepfius were all removed the year following. The first of these excellent men was for thirty-six years pastor at Wittemberg: and how useful his labours were in various other places, to which he was deputed for the purpose of organizing reformation, has abundantly appeared in the course of our history. The impression made on his mind by Luther's Tract on the Babylonish Captivity of the Church, in the year 1521, was remarkable. When he had read a few pages of it, he said, "The author of this book is the most pestilent heretic that ever infested the church of Christ." After a few days' close attention to the work he recanted his opinion, and declared, "The whole world is blind, and this man alone sees the truth."—He seems never to have quitted Wittemberg on account of the war, not even at the time of the siege; though he was deeply affected with the events which took place, particularly the captivity of the good elector. He supported his mind by constant devotion, and assured himself "that the ark of the church would be safe amid all storms." He mourned over the changes and the controversies which followed: but he himself altered nothing either in rites

or in doctrines. The scenes of his latter days were, through the goodness of God, calm and peaceful. During the last year of his life, when he had grown too weak to preach, he daily frequented the house of God, and there commended both himself and the church to the divine mercy; taking part also in the consultations held for the good of the church. He often conversed delightfully with his friends on the blessed hope of eternal life, and on the prospects opening to posterity. After offering up fervent prayers, and frequently repeating the words, "This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent," he slept in peace, April 20, 1558, in the seventy-third year of his age.

Justus Menius had for many years laboured successfully at Saxe-Gotha: but the year before his death he sought at Leipzig some retreat from the contests raised by Flacius.

Schnepfius was of a good family at Hailbrun, and was by a pious mother devoted to the service of God and religion from his infancy. He at first however applied himself to jurisprudence, and with those flattering prospects of success which a profession, immediately conversant with property and men's temporal interests, never fails to hold out to talents and industry: but he was prevailed upon by the entreaties of his mother to turn his back upon the splendid visions of earthly riches and honours, and to fulfil her original wishes respecting him. After he began to apply to theology, he continued for six years involved in the labyrinths of papal error; but at length he arrived at the knowledge of the truth, by means of the light which Luther had been the instrument of diffusing. This was soon after the year 1520. After labouring usefully at some other places, he was called to the office of a preacher at Marburg, and a professor in the university which the landgrave of Hesse had founded there. In that situation he ac-

quired great weight and influence: but he was at length induced to exchange it for the important post of pastor of Stutgard, under Ulric of Würtemberg, in 1535. In 1543, he removed to Tübingen, under the same prince, and continued there till driven away, to the great grief of the citizens, by the means taken to enforce the Interim. He was then made rector of the new university of Jena, by the sons of John Frederic; and filled his office with honour till his death, in the sixty-third year of his age, November 1, 1558.—He had attended most of the diets and conferences held on the subject of religion; and, in particular, had been Bucer's coadjutor in his disputations with Malvenda, at Ratisbon, in 1546.

The death of Melancthon himself took place in 1560, and that of Amsdorf about 1563.

Joachim Morlin, first driven from Prussia for his opposition to Osiander, but afterwards recalled and made a bishop there; John Aurifaber, late of Breslaw, but now of Jena; Paul Eber, successor to Forster in All Saints church, and afterwards to Justus Jonas as chief pastor of Wittemberg; John Brentius formerly of Halle in Suabia, but latterly of Stutgard; John Pfeffinger of Leipzig; and George Major of Wittemberg, survived to a later period, and died between the years 1566 and 1574. Brentius suffered cruel persecutions on account of the Interim. His history furnishes a warning to students, he having contracted a distressing and injurious habit of sleeplessness, which continued to the end of his days, by accustoming himself to rise soon after midnight to pursue his studies.—Eber excites our sympathy, by having been crippled in early youth by a fall, the circumstances of which were concealed from his parents, and the opportunity thus lost of using means which might have prevented or alleviated its consequences. He lived however to become not only a very excellent, but an eminent and highly useful character.—For Major a painful interest is excited

by his heavy domestic afflictions ; which he bore with Christian constancy and resignation.

The notice of these excellent and eminent men, (for none but eminent men have been recounted,) however brief it may have been, cannot but be gratifying, if it were only for their number—which shews how remarkably God had at that period visited his church, and replenished it with able faithful pastors and reformers. The only circumstances which excite our regret are, finding so great a number of such men removed in the course of twenty years, and so many of them in the very midst of their days and their usefulness. The latter of these circumstances, in particular, impresses upon us the necessity of “working while it is day,” seeing the night so soon cometh, “wherein no man can work.” But the Son of God “holdeth the stars—the angels of the churches—in his right-hand,” and disposeth of them as seemeth him good. We cannot however but feel and lament, that the succession of men coming up in the Lutheran church was deteriorating, and they attained not the level of their predecessors in simplicity and devotedness. Many of them were turning aside to vain jangling. We shall therefore gladly withdraw our attention from scenes of growing secularity and contention, to fix it again, should circumstances permit, on those earlier stages of a reformed church, which we may hope to find marked with greater spirituality.

Here then we consider our history of the Lutheran reformation as regularly closing. A few miscellaneous matters, however, indirectly connected with it, may be referred to another chapter, which may be considered in the light of an appendix.

CHAPTER XXIX.

P. P. Vergerio, and Francis Spira—Juan Diaz—The Waldenses of Provence—The Council of Trent.

It has been already intimated¹ that Peter Paul Vergerio, who was for many years a confidential agent of the court of Rome, and for his services was made bishop of Capo d'Istria, in the territory of Venice, eventually became a protestant, and suffered for his religion. The account given of his conversion and subsequent conduct deserves to be here recited.

The last service in which Vergerio was employed by the pope, though under the assumed character of a delegate from the French king, was at the conferences held at Worms in 1540-41,—to frustrate their design, and procure their dissolution; in which objects he succeeded. On his return to Rome, the pope designed to make him a cardinal: but at this time a suspicion was revived, which cardinal Alean-der had three years before insinuated, that, by long intercourse with the Germans Vergerio had become too favourably disposed to the Lutheran heresy. Vergerio, being informed by one of the cardinals what had obstructed his advancement, was both surprised and indignant; and, to clear himself of the injurious suspicion, retired to the seat of his bishopric, to write a book which should bear this

¹ Above, p. 84.

title, "Against the Apostates of Germany." But in order to refute the Lutherans it was necessary to read their books: and in doing this an effect was produced, as we may assuredly believe, under the influence of divine grace, which Vergerio had little anticipated; he became convinced that the principles he was opposing were true, and founded in scripture. "Laying aside therefore," says the historian, "all hopes of a cardinal's hat, he went to consult with his own brother, John Baptista, bishop of the neighbouring city of Pola. His brother, alarmed, at first bewailed his condition; but, having at his earnest entreaty applied himself to search the holy scriptures with him, particularly on the great point of justification, he also yielded to conviction, and concluded the popish doctrine to be false. Whereupon, rejoicing in one another, they began to teach the people of Istria, (as the office of a bishop requires,) and to preach up the benefit of Christ to mankind, pointing out, at the same time, what works God requires of us; that so they might bring men over to the true worship of their Maker." But many adversaries arose against them; among whom Hannibal Grisonio, the chief of the inquisition, was distinguished. This man, coming to Pola and Capo d'Istria, rushed into the houses of the citizens, and searched for prohibited books. He then mounted the pulpit, and pronounced all excommunicated who did not inform of persons suspected of Lutheranism, threatening those who did not repent and submit themselves, that they should be burned at the stake.¹ He further openly incited the people to stone Vergerio and his heretical associates, as the true cause of the calamities which they had of late years suffered in their

¹ "He denounced his threats from door to door every where Soon after nothing was seen but accusations: every one engaged in them, without regard to consanguinity or gratitude: the wife did not spare her husband, the son his father, or the client his patron."—*Bayle, Art. Vergerio.*

olives, their corn, their vines, their cattle, and other goods. Vergerio upon this withdrew to his friend cardinal Hercules Gonzaga, at Mantua; but, being soon given to understand that he could not be harboured there, he betook himself, in March, 1546, to the council then sitting at Trent, in which he had a right to appear as a member, designing to justify himself before the assembled fathers. The pope, understanding his design, though he would gladly have made him a prisoner, yet dared not venture upon a step which would have given the Germans such a handle, and so glaringly have impeached the freedom of the council. He contented himself, therefore, with ordering that he should not be admitted into the assembly, or be heard by them. In consequence, after some other removals, he at length took up his abode at Padua. And here there seems reason to suspect that his zeal in some degree abated, even if his determination did not waver, when a very awful occurrence, in the year 1548, made a salutary impression on his mind.

This was no other than the awful fate of Francis Spira, which every one has seen alluded to, but with the particulars of which few comparatively are acquainted. Spira was a lawyer in extensive practice at the bar, who resided at Citadella, not far from Padua. He had embraced the reformed religion with great zeal and earnestness; and, making daily proficiency in the knowledge of its truths, expressed his thoughts concerning the several points of doctrine, with great freedom, both to his friends and to those generally with whom he conversed. Information of this was conveyed to the pope's legate at Venice, and Spira began to perceive the danger to which he was exposed, and to revolve with himself what was best to be done. The legate had sent for him, and he determined to obey the summons. Before him he retracted his alleged errors, begged absolution, and promised obedience in future. The

legate enjoined him to go home, and make a public recantation. He promised to do so: and, although his conscience reproached him, yet at the solicitation of his friends, who told him that the welfare not only of himself, but of his wife, his children, his estate, and every thing depended upon it, he executed his sinful engagement. But soon after, struck with horror at what he had done, he fell sick both in body and mind, and began to despair of God's mercy. Growing worse and worse, and expressing himself in language too awful to be repeated, concerning his crime and his inevitable damnation, he was removed, for the sake of better advice, from Citadella to Padua. The physicians pronounced his malady to be "the effect of pensiveness and too anxious thought," and recommended, as the best remedy, good discourse and spiritual consolation. Many learned men therefore daily visited him, and laboured to relieve his mind by such passages of scripture as exhibit the riches and extent of the mercy of God towards repenting sinners. He told them, that he denied not the truth of all they said, but that these texts belonged not to him, for he was doomed to everlasting pains, because for fear of danger he had abjured the known truth; that these pains he already felt in his mind, and could not love God, but horribly hated him. In this condition he continued, refusing all sustenance, and spitting it out again when forced upon him. Advice and counsel, whether of the physician or the divine, being lost upon him, and his bodily infirmity and the anguish of his mind increasing daily, he was taken home again, and there died miserably in all the horrors of despair.—Such examples are happily rare; but they do from time to time occur, presenting a warning, never to be forgotten, that we should not, for any terrors or any allurements that a fellow-creature can hold out to us, be induced to do violence to our consciences, and thus draw down upon ourselves the wrath of Him

who is "able to destroy both body and soul in hell."

Among others who frequently visited Spira, while he lay at Padua, was Vergerio: and, whatever might be the success of his endeavours in behalf of the unhappy man, the effect was good with regard to himself. He became more confirmed in the principles he had received, and resolved to leave his native country, and all that he had, and to submit to a voluntary exile, in order to take up his abode in some place where he might safely profess the doctrine of Christ. Accordingly he, a few months afterwards, quitted the country of Bergamo, and went and settled in Switzerland among the Grisons: and, having for some years preached the gospel there and in the Valteline, he was invited by Christopher, duke of Würtemberg, to Tübingen, where he passed the remainder of his days. His brother, the bishop of Pola, died before Vergerio left Italy, with the suspicion of having been poisoned: and he himself was, about the time of his removal, deprived of his bishopric by a sentence of the court of Rome. He died October 4, 1566.

Another convert from popery paid a heavier penalty for his desertion of "the true church." The following tragical occurrence took place at the period of the last conferences at Ratisbon, in the year 1546.

Juan Diaz, by birth a Spaniard, having received a learned education in his own country, removed to the university of Paris, where he passed thirteen years, applying himself principally to theology. His skill in the learned languages, (including the Hebrew,) and his talents and attainments generally, as well as the virtuous habits of his life, are spoken of in the highest terms. Having met with the writings of Luther, and being indefatigable in the study of the sacred scriptures, he became gradually more and more dissatisfied with the divinity of the Sorbonne,

He in consequence left Paris, and repaired first to Geneva, where Calvin then taught, and finally to Strasburg, where he cultivated the acquaintance of Bucer. Bucer, appreciating his talents, and being well satisfied with his character, when he himself was deputed to attend the conferences at Ratisbon, petitioned the senate of Strasburg to make Diaz his associate; which was accordingly done. When he came to Ratisbon, Diaz waited upon his fellow-countryman Malvenda, whom he had known at Paris, and who, as we have seen, led in the conference on the part of the papists. Malvenda, affecting amazement, expressed his deep regret to see him in those parts, and in the company of protestants, "who," he said, "would triumph more for one Spaniard gained to their party, than for several thousand Germans!" He entreated him therefore to regard his reputation, and not to bring so foul a blot on his character, his family, and his country. Diaz replied modestly, said a few words in favour of the protestant doctrine, and at that time took his leave. A few days after, they met again by appointment; and then Malvenda, in a studied harangue, recurring to the character and claims of their common country, and setting forth the terrors, both temporal and eternal, of a papal excommunication, left no means untried to withdraw him from his present connexions; concluding with the recommendation, that he should not venture to wait for the emperor's arrival at Ratisbon, but should set out to meet him, and casting himself at the feet of the emperor's confessor,¹ acknowledge his offence, and sue for mercy; in which suit he promised his own endeavours to assist him. Diaz, regarding this professedly friendly advice as insidious, and otherwise moved by what he had heard, replied at considerable length, with great spirit, and with that eloquence which is mentioned as one of his distin-

¹ Peter à Soto, a perfidious sanguinary bigot.

guishing endowments. He declared himself ready to meet all dangers, and willing to shed his blood in what he esteemed the most important cause on earth; "for what," said he, "is life without the knowledge of the true religion, but a continued series of unrelieved miseries?" He referred to the declaration of the Saviour concerning such as should not confess him before men; a declaration which he told Malvenda ought to make him tremble. He wondered that Malvenda should talk to him in the manner he had done concerning the pope's excommunication, which almost every child now knew to be but an empty sound, devised to uphold the tyranny of the court of Rome. The pope however might freely, as far as *he* was concerned, assume to himself all the power and all the riches of the world, if only he would allow the people to enjoy the heavenly doctrine, unadulterated and pure. With respect to the state of the whole church in communion with the Roman pontiff, and that of his own country in particular, (of whose stedfast adherence to the faith Malvenda boasted, as rendering Spain the admiration of the world,) he deplored it more than words could express: and he appealed to the conscience of Malvenda for the truth of various particulars, which he enumerated, concerning the clergy and the people. "You," he said, "and those associated with you, effectually shut out of Spain every ray of that divine light, which is now rising upon almost all the world beside." He declared his determination, by the grace of God, to profess and proclaim with his last breath the doctrine which he had embraced: and he solemnly warned Malvenda to reconsider the course he was pursuing, to fear the judgment of God, and to promote, instead of obstructing the progress of his truth.

The firmness and zeal of Diaz deserve our admiration; but they may be considered as having cost him his life. Malvenda wrote to the emperor's

confessor, informing him of all that had passed, and solemnly urged the necessity of "promptly meeting the rising evil." When the letter was received, there happened to be present one Malvina, or Marquina, lately come from Rome. He had been intimately acquainted with Diaz, and being informed of the charges brought against him, he at the time attempted somewhat in his excuse; and, returning home to Rome a few days after, he reported what had passed to Alfonso, the brother of Diaz, an advocate in the sacred Rota. Alfonso, struck with the statement, and perhaps also with letters which had been written to him, immediately set out on his journey, and did not rest till he found his brother at Neuburg, whither he had gone upon business during the suspension of the conferences. Juan, greatly surprised to see him, was soon informed of the cause of his visit, and again assailed with the same arguments which Malvenda had previously employed; but they had no better success than before. Alfonso then held out to him tempting offers, if he would accompany him to Rome: but all in vain. He next therefore changed his plan; and, having suffered some days to elapse, told him that he was himself convinced; and professed to be in love with the gospel, and desirous to promote it: but he represented to his brother that he was thrown away in Germany, where there were so many learned men to uphold the truth: he entreated him therefore to go with him into Italy, where he might be of service to multitudes: they would take Trent in the way, where numerous learned persons were assembled, and, after visiting Rome, proceed to Naples: and, if right doctrine were thus disseminated in Italy, it might (he said) be a means of its spreading into their native country of Spain also. Juan overjoyed at the change, both on his brother's account and his own, wrote to his friends at Ratisbon; who in return advised him by no means to think of the journey: and Bucer, coming

to Neuberg on his return from Ratisbon, would not stir from the place till Alfonso had taken his departure. Alfonso therefore prepared to make his journey alone; and, the day before he set out, addressed his brother in the most affectionate manner; exhorted him to constancy, and thought himself most happy in that, through his brother's discourse, he had in a few days made such advances in the right knowledge of God; begged Juan to write to him from time to time, promised him every service in his power, and forced money upon him even against his will. Thus, with mutual tears, they took their leave, and Alfonso travelled post to Augsburg, thirty-two miles from Neuberg. Having there paid the driver to wait his convenience, he suddenly returned back to Neuberg on horseback. By the road he purchased an axe of a carpenter, and entered the town by break of day, accompanied by a bloody ruffian, whom he had brought with him from Italy, habited as a courier; and made his way directly to his brother's lodgings. Here he put the pretended courier forward, as bearing a letter for Juan from his brother Alfonso. The man being let in went directly up stairs; and Juan Diaz being awakened out of his sleep, and told that a post was there from his brother, immediately went out to him into the next room, having only thrown a cloak loosely over him; and, while with some difficulty (it being not yet fully light,) he read the letter, which expressed mighty concern for his danger, and warned him to beware of Malvenda and other such enemies of the gospel, the assassin, standing behind him, and drawing the axe from under his coat, struck it with such force into his skull, that he literally fell dead without uttering a word! The man then, leaving the axe in the wound, hastened down stairs, and joined Alfonso, who was keeping watch at the bottom; when they set off again together with all speed to Augsburg. The whole was transacted with such silence, that nothing was heard of it, till the

rattling of the ruffian's spurs in going down stairs, after the murder, awakened Claude Senarcle, a Savoyard of noble family, who was studying under the direction of Bucer and Diaz, and who happened that night to sleep in the same chamber with his instructor. He, immediately getting up and going into the room, had the horrid spectacle of his murdered friend presented to his sight!

The murderers were presently pursued, and were taken at Inspruck: but, to the eternal disgrace of Charles V, though there was the fullest proof against them, and though justice was repeatedly demanded of him in this cause by many princes of the empire, they were, through the influence of the cardinals of Trent and Augsburg, screened by him, and never called to account. He first forbade the ordinary magistrates to proceed, declaring that he would hear the cause in the diet: but, when formally called upon to do so, all the reply he made was, that he would advise about it with his brother, within whose territories the accused were now prisoners; and, when Ferdinand was applied to, his answer was still to the same purport. The murderers were in consequence allowed to escape untried and with impunity: and "the liberated fratricide appeared openly at Trent without exciting a shudder in the breasts of the holy fathers met in council; was welcomed back to Rome; and finally returned to his native country, where he was admitted to the society of men of rank and education," who rather applauded than censured his sanctified crime.

This particular account of Diaz we owe to Claude Senarcle, above-mentioned, who published his history, with a preface by Bucer, in the very year, 1546, in which the murder took place. Senarcle bears a pleasing testimony to the devout manner in which Diaz was accustomed to pray, and to his having done so, in his presence, the day before the murder; adding also, "that he had passed a considerable part

of that very night in extolling the works of God, and in proposing motives to sincere devotedness to him." Senarcle's account is confirmed in every material point by other narratives published at the time: and indeed "so far were the Roman-catholics from denying the facts, that many of them, and especially the countrymen of Diaz, justified and even applauded the deed."¹ Even Maimbourg, who wrote in the seventeenth century, though he condemns the murder as the offspring of "a false zeal in the cause of religion," shews little abhorrence of the fact.

In the case of Juan Diaz we have had an awful example of the power of false or perverted religion to blind the understanding, and to harden the hearts of men; not only suppressing the common feelings of humanity, but extinguishing every spark of relative affection. The following narrative, given alike by Sleidan the protestant, and de Thou (or Thuanus) the Roman-catholic historian, concerning the Waldenses of Provence—a part of that poor and suffering but virtuous people, who have maintained from the earliest ages a steady protest against the corruptions of the Roman Antichrist—exhibits another instance of the same kind, only on a more extensive scale. The events related took place in the year 1545: and they form but too true a specimen of those which have often marked the Waldensian history.

"In Provence, in France, there is a people called Waldenses, who by an old custom acknowledge not the pope of Rome, have always professed a greater purity of doctrine, and, since Luther appeared, anxiously sought after an increase of knowledge. Many times had they been complained of to the king, as despisers of magistrates and fomenters of rebellion; which

¹ Sepulveda, "one of the most elegant prose writers who flourished at that time in Spain," expressly says, "The news of the slaughter was disagreeable to none of our countrymen."—I add this fact, and a sentence or two at the close of the above narrative, from Dr. M'Crie.

envious rather than true accusation is by most made use of at this day. They live together in some towns and villages, among which is Merindol. About five years before, sentence had been pronounced against them in the parliament of Aix, the chief judicature of the province, that they should all promiscuously be destroyed, that the houses should be pulled down, the village levelled with the ground, the trees felled, and the place rendered a desert. Now, though this sentence was pronounced, yet it was not then put in execution; William Bellay of Langey, the king's lieutenant in Piemont, with some others, having represented the case to the king as one that ought to be reviewed by himself. But at length, in this year, John Meinier, president of the parliament of Aix, having summoned that body together, on the twelfth of April, reads to them the king's letters, which warranted him to carry the sentence into effect. These letters Meinier is said to have obtained by the influence of the cardinal of Tournon, and through the medium of Philip Courtain, a fit agent in such a business. However, having received them in the month of January, he produced them not immediately, but kept them back to a season more proper for the exploit. The letters having been read, some members of the parliament were chosen to see that they were duly complied with; and Meinier offered himself for their assistant, as having in the absence of Grignian, the governor of the province, the chief administration of affairs. Now, before this time, he had by the king's orders raised forces for the English war; and these he makes use of for his present purpose. Besides these, he orders all that were able to bear arms at Marseilles, Aix, Arles, and other populous places, to repair to him, on pain of severe penalties in case of disobedience. He had also assistance sent him from Avignon, which is under the dominion of the pope.—His first attack was made, not on the inhabitants of Merindol, but upon the country adjoining

the town of Pertuis. On the 13th of April, Meinier, attended by a number of gentlemen and officers came to Cadenet. In the mean time some commanders of troops make an irruption into one or two villages situate on the river Durance, and, putting all to fire and sword, plunder and carry away a great many cattle. The like was done also in other places at the same time. The people of Merindol, seeing all in flames around them, leave their habitations, flee into the woods, and pass the night in great consternation at the village of Saintfalaise. The inhabitants of this place were themselves preparing for flight; for the pope's vice-legate, the bishop of Cavaillon, had ordered some captains to fall upon them, and put them to the sword. The next day they advanced further into the woods; for they were beset on all hands with danger, Meinier having made it death for any person to aid or assist them, and commanding them all, without distinction, to be massacred wherever they were found. The same order was in force in the neighbouring places of the pope's jurisdiction; and some bishops of that country were reported to have maintained a great part of the troops employed. The fugitives had therefore a tedious and distressing journey, marching with their children on their backs and in their arms, and some in the cradle, and poor women also in a state of pregnancy following in the rear. When they had reached the appointed place, whither many in that forlorn condition had fled, they soon had intelligence that Meinier was mustering all his forces that he might fall upon them. This news they learned towards evening. On the receipt of it, having consulted together what was best to be done, they resolve, because the ways were rough and difficult, to leave their wives, daughters, and little children there, with some few to bear them company, (amongst whom was one of their ministers,) and the rest to betake themselves, as had been previously

proposed, to the town of Mussi. This they did in the hope that the enemy might shew some compassion towards a helpless and comfortless multitude: but what wailing and lamentation, what groanings and embracings, there were at parting, may easily be conceived.—Having marched the whole night, and passed mount Leberon, they had the sad prospect of many villages and farms all in flames. Meinier, in the mean time, having divided his troops into two bodies, sets about his work: and, because he had got intelligence of the place to which the inhabitants of Merindol had betaken themselves, he himself marches to that town, and sends the other division of his troops in pursuit of the fugitives. But, before these were come into the wood, one of the soldiers, moved with pity, runs before, and from the top of a rock, where he judged the poor fugitives might have rested, throws down two stones, calling to them by intervals (though he did not see them,) instantly to fly for their lives: and, at the same moment, two of those who had betaken themselves to Mussi come, and, having got notice of the enemy's approach, compel the minister of the church, and the rest of those few guards, who, as we said, were left with the women, to be gone, having shewn them a steep way through the wood, by which they might escape all danger in their flight. Scarcely had these gone, when the raging soldiers come in, shouting and making a heavy noise, and with drawn swords prepared for the butchery. However, for the present they forbear to kill; but, having committed many acts of insult, and robbed the poor women of all their money and provisions, they carry them away prisoners. They had purposed to have used them still more basely; but a captain of horse prevented it, who by chance coming in threatened them, and commanded them to march directly to Meinier: so that they proceeded no further, but, leaving the women there, who were about five hundred in num-

ber, they carried off the cattle and booty.—Meinier in the mean time comes to Merindol, and, finding it deserted, plunders and sets it on fire; first exercising however an act of barbarity towards the only person left in the place, a youth, whom he ordered to be bound to an olive tree and shot to death. He marches next to Cabrieres, and begins to batter the town. Through the medium of captain Poulen, however, he persuades the town's-people, upon promise of safety, to open the gates; but, when that was done, and the soldiers let in, after a little pause, all were put to the sword, without respect to age or sex. Many fled to the church, others to other places, and some into the wine cellar of the castle; but, being dragged out (all but those last named,) into a meadow, and stripped naked, they were murdered without exception of either man or woman. Meinier also shuts up about forty women in a barn full of hay and straw, and then sets it on fire: and, when the poor creatures, having attempted, but in vain, to smother the fire with their clothes, which they had stripped off for the purpose, betook themselves to the opening at which the hay used to be taken in, designing to leap out, they were kept in with pikes and spears, till they all perished in the flames. This happened on the 20th of April.—Meinier after this sends part of his forces to besiege the town of la Coste: but, just as they were beginning their march, those were found, who had fled into the wine-cellar of the castle. A noise being thereupon raised, as if some ambush had been discovered, the soldiers are recalled, and put every man of them to the sword. The number of the slain, in the town and in the fields, amounted to eight hundred. The young infants which survived the massacre were, for the most part, rebaptized by the enemy.—Affairs being thus despatched at Cabrieres, the forces were sent to la Coste. The governor of that town had urged the citizens beforehand to carry their arms into

the castle, and in four places to make breaches in their walls; which if they would do, he promised, by his influence with Meinier, to secure them from all injury. They were prevailed upon to comply with his advice, and he set out, apparently to intercede for them. He had not gone far before he met the soldiers; who nevertheless proceeded in their march, and attacked the place. At the first onset they did but little, but the next morning they more briskly renewed the assault; and, having burned all the buildings in the suburbs, easily became masters of the place; and the more so because the night before most of the inhabitants had deserted the town and fled, having let themselves down from the walls by ropes. After slaughtering all that came in their way, and plundering the town, they rush into the garden adjoining the castle, whither the women and girls had fled in great consternation, and there treat them with such barbarous indecency and cruelty, during the next day and night, that numbers of them shortly after died.—While these things were going on in that quarter, such of the people of Merindol, and others who wandered with them through the woods and over the rocks, as were taken, were either sent to the galleys, or put to death, and many of them died of want.—Not far from the town of Mussi, some five and twenty men had concealed themselves in a cave hollowed out in a rock: but, being betrayed, they were all suffocated with smoke or burned to death. So that no kind of cruelty was abstained from towards these poor people. Some of them, however, who had escaped the massacre, arrived at Geneva and the neighbouring places.

“When the news of these sad events reached Germany, it raised great indignation. Those of the Swiss also, who were not of the popish religion, interceded with the French king to shew clemency to such as had fled their country: but he returned them for answer, that he ‘had just cause for what

he had done; and that what he did within his own territories, or how he punished the guilty, it no more concerned them to inquire, than it did him to intermeddle in their affairs.'

"The preceding year, the Waldenses had sent to the king a written confession of their faith, that he might perceive the innocency of their tenets."¹

In the preceding narratives we have seen what has been the too frequent practical working of the anti-christian system, with which the church of Rome has identified itself. A brief notice of the proceedings of the COUNCIL OF TRENT will illustrate the manner in which the corrupt doctrines of that church have been sanctioned, and its most important affairs conducted. The convocation of the council has been noticed. The whole term of its duration, from its commencement to its dissolution, amounted to eighteen years, extending from December, 1545, to December, 1563: but the time of its actual session was somewhat less than four years—more than fourteen being passed in a state of actual or virtual suspension. My examination of its history leads me fully to concur in the sentence of Dr. Robertson. Having described the three authors, to whom we are chiefly indebted for the accounts we have of it, Father Paul, Cardinal Pallavicini, and Vargas, (all of them Roman-catholics, though of different grades,) he says: "But whichsoever of these authors an intelligent person takes for his guide in forming a judgment concerning the spirit of the council, he must discover so much ambition as well as artifice among some of the members, so much ignorance and corruption among others; he must observe such a strange infusion of human policy and passions, mingled with such a scanty portion of sim-

¹ Thuanus says that twenty-two towns and villages were destroyed. He adds, that Francis I. was reported to have given it in charge, a little before his death, to his son Henry to call the parliament of Aix to account for the proceeding; and that one person was put to death for the part he had taken in it.

plcity, sanctity of manners, and love of truth;... that he will find it no easy matter to believe, that any extraordinary influence of the Holy Ghost hovered over this assembly, and dictated its decrees." Indeed, not only more secularity, but more chicane and intrigue, more fierce contention, more that is opposite to all which ought to characterize a sacred assembly, whose professed objects were to investigate divine truth, and to purge the church from error in doctrine and corruption in manners, was found here, than in the ordinary diets and parliaments of mere worldly politicians.

What particularly distinguished this council was, its undertaking to fix the doctrines and the observances of the Romish church, in a more accurate manner than had ever before been attempted: and on the footing on which it placed both one and the other they must be considered as standing to this day, for it is the last council that has been held: no other assembly has since been called possessing authority to revise or even to explain its decrees. They must therefore, as far as they go, be considered as the standard of the faith and worship of every consistent Roman-catholic. And by it, doctrines which had hitherto been considered as mere private opinions, open to discussion, were absurdly made articles of faith, and required to be received on pain of excommunication; and rites, which had formerly been observed only in deference to custom supposed to be ancient, were established by the authority of the church, and declared to be essential parts of its worship. Thus the breach between the church of Rome and the protestants, instead of being closed, was widened and made irreparable. Yet still, says Mosheim, "those who expect to derive from the decrees of the council of Trent, and the compendious confession of faith, which was drawn up by order of Pius IV, a clear, complete, and perfect knowledge of the Romish faith, will be

greatly disappointed...Many things are expressed in a vague and ambiguous manner, and that designedly, on account of the intestine divisions and warm debates that reigned in the church....Several tenets are omitted which no Roman catholic is allowed to call in question;...and several doctrines and rules of worship are inculcated in a much more rational and decent manner, than that in which they appear in the daily service of the church, and in the public practice of its members." The view therefore presented of the Roman-catholic religion by the definitions of the council of Trent must be considered as the *least unfavourable* of which it is susceptible; and the attempts frequently made¹ to soften down the Romish doctrines and practices, even much below this standard, must be pronounced fallacious, and a perversion of fact.

The decisions of the council on several important subjects, traditions, the apocrypha, the Vulgate version of the scriptures—establishing them all as of equal authority with the original inspired writings, and denouncing anathemas against all who should dissent from these decisions—have been already noticed.²

In favour of their sanctioning the Vulgate version as of inspired authority, the argument, F. Paul says, weighed much, "that, if every one had liberty to examine whether passages, on which the doctrine of the church is founded, were well translated, running to other translations, and seeking how it was in the original, the new grammarians would confound all, and would be made judges and arbiters of faith; and, instead of divines and canonists, pedants would be preferred to be bishops and cardinals."

The next point of doctrine considered in the council was original sin. The whole subject proved highly perplexing to the fathers. The nature of

¹ Bossuet, C. Butler, &c. &c.

² Above, p. 204-5.

this original taint and corruption, the mode of its transmission, the means of its remission, and how far the blessed Virgin was involved in it, were all found to be very unmanageable questions.—In the end, a decree was passed in the fifth session, consisting of five articles; the last of which anathematized all who should deny “that the guilt of sin is removed by the grace which Jesus Christ confers in baptism, and all which is sinful entirely taken away.”

The next article was the capital one of JUSTIFICATION. On this the discussions were rendered very complicated, by being made to involve, not only the nature and means of justification, the nature of faith, and the quality of works, antecedent, concomitant, and subsequent, but also the questions of assurance, free will, and predestination. The subject was felt, both by the divines and the fathers, to be singularly important, as “all the errors of Luther resolved themselves into it;” and withal singularly difficult, since (unlike the question of original sin,) “justification by faith only was a thing never heard of before;” and Luther’s doctrine, relative to every part of it, such as had “never been thought of by any school writer, and therefore never confuted or discussed!”¹

Melancthon once affirms, that the reformers had gained more ground upon their opponents on this head of justification than on any other. Accordingly the two parties were actually able, in the conferences at Ratisbon in 1541, to frame an article upon it in which they could both concur; and which, though not satisfactory, was one that, if rightly interpreted, Luther seemed to think might be allowed to pass, provided other points could be arranged. Accordingly we are surprised and gratified to find some leading characters openly asserting in the council the forensic sense of the term, or that justification

¹ F. Paul.

stands contradistinguished to condemnation, not to unholiness, and consists in being pronounced entitled to the rewards of righteousness; in short, that it is not to be confounded with sanctification. Even the *imputation* of Christ's righteousness to us, wanted not its advocates. But, as F. Paul with admirable sagacity remarks, "The principal point of the difficulty they touched not, namely, WHETHER A MAN IS RIGHTEOUS, (JUSTIFIED,) AND THEN DOETH RIGHTEOUSLY, OR BY DOING RIGHTEOUSLY BECOMETH RIGHTEOUS" OR JUSTIFIED.¹ This profound author here places his finger on the precise point at issue—the very core of the question. No one means, "to exclude either hope or charity from being always joined as inseparable mates with faith in the man that is justified, or works from being added as necessary duties, required at the hands of every justified man:"² but the question is, Do they *go before* and *procure* his justification, or do they "follow after," and *prove* him justified? And on this question our church has, in her xith and xiith Articles, pronounced her decided and unequivocal judgment.

The question of *assurance* of salvation, or at least of present acceptance with God, occasioned long and sharp debates. It was at first maintained, "that uncertainty was both profitable and meritorious," as conducing to humility and diligence. By degrees, so much certainty seemed to be admitted "as did exclude all doubt:" the argument, however, that this conclusion was "too much in favour of the Lutherans," had great weight against it; and the question was left undecided for the present.³

On the subject of free will, as well as on that of predestination, many would be surprised at the degree of what, in modern language, would be called Calvinism, which was found in the council. Catharinus, a leading Dominican, contended "that the

¹ See above, vol. i. p. 26.

² Hooker.

³ F. Paul.

article, 'Free will extends only to doing ill, and hath no power to do good,' was not so easily to be condemned." Soto, another Dominican, defended with much hesitation the opinion, that the consent of man's free will is necessary to give efficiency to divine grace, "because there was opposed to it this argument, that the distinction of the elect from the reprobate would in that case proceed from man, contrary to the perpetual Catholic sense—which is, that it is grace alone which separates the vessels of mercy from the vessels of wrath." Others "wished care to be taken, lest, through too great eagerness to condemn Luther, they should run into a contrary extreme—that objection being esteemed above all, that *by this means the divine election or predestination would be for works foreseen—which no divine did admit.*" Nay, "though the opinions were divers," yet "the most esteemed divines among them thought," that even the high supralapsarian doctrine—making rejection to be, equally with election, independent of works foreseen—"was catholic, and the contrary heretical, because the good school-writers, Aquinas, Scotus, and others did so think;" and also because of scriptural passages which they cited!¹

These discussions were frequently marked by much animosity. In particular, we blush to record the disgraceful violence into which the bishop of Cava was betrayed. He was so incensed at a remark of the bishop of Chiron, that he actually took his right reverend brother by the beard, and tore out some of the hair!

At length, in the sixth session, the decree of the council was promulgated, consisting of sixteen articles, followed by thirty-three canons; the former laying down the approved doctrine, and the latter anathematizing the errors opposed to it. This decree was said to have "decided more articles in one

¹ F. Paul.

session, than all the councils held in the church from the apostles' times had done."¹ The seventh article of the decree asserts the great error of the church of Rome concerning justification, which, by confounding it with sanctification, makes it in effect to be, however it may be disguised, of works and not of grace—for our own internal holiness, and not for the obedience unto death of Christ alone. Justification, it says, is "not only remission of sins, but sanctification, and a renovation of the inner man, by a voluntary reception of grace and of the gifts which accompany it." The tenth article accordingly speaks of "the increase of the justification we have received, by advancing from virtue to virtue."

Immediately after this session, Soto, the Dominican, wrote three books on Nature and Grace, which he dedicated to the council, to be, as he said, "a commentary" on its decrees concerning original sin, justification, and the subjects connected with these—finding in the decrees all his own opinions. This called forth from Vega, the Franciscan, fifteen large books on the same subject, in which the several articles of the decrees were so expounded as to confirm all *his* sentiments—"differing from those of Soto in almost all points, and in many directly contrary to them!" Nor was this all: but, Soto having in his book asserted, with respect to assurance, that the council had denied the possibility of any man's knowing, with such certainty as to exclude all doubt, that he is possessed of grace; Catharinus, now made bishop of Minori, wrote against him, maintaining the very contrary, and that the council had in effect declared it *a duty* to have such certainty! He, too, dedicated his work to the sacred assembly itself.—Several publications followed from the two parties, each of which appealed to the council, and adduced the testimonies of differ-

¹ F. Paul.

ent members of that body in its own favour. This put men out of all hope of understanding the council, when it appeared that it did not understand itself. It moreover raised the question of the infallibility of that assembly. "Perhaps," says F. Paul, "he would hit upon the truth, who should say, that, in framing the decree, each party refused words contrary to the opinion they maintained, and all rested in those which they thought might be adapted to their own meaning."—This is certainly giving to the council all that can be allowed to belong to it—"unity of words and contrariety of meanings."

The subject of the sacraments generally, and of baptism and confirmation in particular, was proposed for the next session. Here again extended discussions took place; and the Franciscans and Dominicans contended so fiercely about the *manner* in which the sacraments contain and convey grace, that the legates were under the necessity of applying both to the generals of those orders, and to the pope, to admonish them to restrain themselves within more decent boundaries, as their dissensions brought the council into disrepute.

It was found so difficult, or rather so impracticable, to define the doctrine in such a manner as not to infringe the sentiment of one party or the other, that, by the advice of the pope, the design was abandoned, and the council contented itself with passing canons to anathematize certain errors, without defining the truth at all.

Accordingly in the seventh session all were anathematized who should say, among other things, that the sacraments were more or fewer in number than seven; or should deny that the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and orders, imprint on the soul *a character*, or spiritual and indelible mark; or that, in administering the sacraments, the minister's *intention* to do what the church intends is necessary. The subject of "the character" imprinted by baptism,

confirmation, and orders was scarcely less perplexing than that of the manner in which the sacraments contain grace. Such refinements were resorted to, that F. Paul observes, it certainly behoved the respective assertors of them "to declare, how far it (the imprinted character) differed from *nothing*."

The absurdities which follow from requiring the right intention of the priest as necessary to the validity of a sacrament, especially among those who make so much to depend exclusively on sacraments, were pointed out by Catharinus with such force and clearness, that it seems wonderful how the council could resist his arguments: nay, he himself afterwards affirmed in a work which he published, that the fathers were of his opinion, and that their determination ought so to be understood!—"Children," he urged, "must be damned, penitents remain unabsolved, the people without the communion, if a priest were an infidel, or a formal hypocrite, and in administering sacraments did not intend what the church did." He added, "If any said these cases were rare, would to God they were so! Suppose," he said, "there were only one such priest, and that he baptized only one child without the intention to convey true baptism; that child, when grown up, might become the bishop of a great city, live many years in his charge, and ordain most of the priests within its limits. Yet he, being himself unbaptized, is not ordained, nor are they ordained that are promoted by him. And thus, in that great city, there will be neither eucharist nor confession! Behold millions of nullities of sacraments by the malice of one minister in one act only!" The council however could not dissent from the previous decision of the council of Florence, which had held the intention necessary.

A very seasonable interruption of the council, of four years' continuance, now occurred, and nothing of consequence took place till the thirteenth session,

when the doctrine of the church concerning the eucharist was laid down in a decree which established all the absurdities of transubstantiation; asserted that, whereas other sacraments have virtue to sanctify in the use of them, this doth *contain the Author of all sanctity* before the use;"¹ and ordained that "all the faithful, according to the custom which has ever been received in the catholic church, are obliged to pay to the holy sacrament the worship called *latreia*, which is due to the true God." Eleven canons followed, anathematizing all who should dissent from any part of the doctrine thus established.

The Dominicans and Franciscans contended fiercely on the question *how* the transubstantiation is effected. The former would not allow that the body and blood of Christ come into the sacrament "by a change of place." "The body," they said, "was where the bread had been, but without *coming* thither." The latter further asserted, "That the manner of Christ's being in heaven, and in the sacrament, differeth not in substance, but in quantity, or extension:" in heaven his body occupies the space which naturally belongs to it; in the sacrament "it is substantially, without possessing any place!"

The subject of the sacraments of penance and extreme unction next followed: and anathemas were decreed, in the fourteenth session, against all such as should hold that penance and extreme unction are not "truly and properly sacraments;" that satisfaction is not made by sufferings voluntarily and submissively borne; or that all are not bound to confess at least once a year.

The dispersion of the council, in consequence of the alarming progress of Maurice of Saxony in the year

¹ Hence the protestants were charged with "giving the people *the creature instead of the Creator*" in the sacrament! And hence the necessity which many felt of "*seeing their Maker*, as the phrase commonly went," in the course of the day, before they could lie down in peace in their beds at night!—Soames's Engl. Reform. i. 346.

1552, soon after took place; and the fathers did not reassemble till 1562, under Pius IV, who had succeeded Paul IV. in 1559. And here by the adroit insertion of the words *proponentibus legatis* in the decree for opening the council, the right of proposing any measure in the assembly was limited to the presidents appointed by the pope; which afterwards occasioned great altercation. The pope however insisted upon the restriction being rigidly adhered to.

Much discussion ensued concerning the prohibition of heretical books. The Index in consequence published included the Annotations of Erasmus on the New Testament; (which Leo X, had approved by a brief in 1518;) and went so far as to proscribe all books, "of what author, art, or idiom soever," printed by *sixty-two printers* who were named, or by any others who *ever had printed* the books of heretics: "so that there scarcely remained," says F. Paul, "a book to be read." "In a word," he adds, "a better device was never found for stultifying men, under the pretence of making them religious."

The question of residence, and with it that of the divine or merely human right of all other prelates beside the bishop of Rome, was now revived; and it continued to perplex the pope and his adherents till near the close of the council. "The mutual distastes between those at Rome and those at Trent," says F. Paul, "were increased on the arrival of every courier. At Trent, the favourers of residence bewailed the miseries of the church, the servitude of the council, and the manifest hopelessness of seeing the reformation proceed from Rome. The opposite party lamented, that a schism was plotted in the council, or rather *an apostacy from the apostolic see.*"

In the twenty-first session, the subject of the eucharist was resumed, chiefly with regard to some points which had not been decided in the thirteenth. A main point was the granting, or still withholding of the cup from the laity. In discussing the ques-

tion, the most absurd arguments were produced and reproduced even to satiety: as, for example, the instance of St. Paul's blessing the bread only on ship-board; the manna given to the Israelites, unaccompanied by any liquid; and Jonathan's extraordinary refreshment by eating honey alone, and not drinking with it! Payva, a Portuguese divine, maintained "very seriously that Christ, both by precept and example, declared the bread to be due to all, and the cup to priests only: for, having consecrated the bread, he gave it to his disciples, who were then mere laics; but, having ordained them priests by the words, '*Do this in remembrance of me,*' he then consecrated the cup and gave it them likewise!"—In the end it was decreed, that communion in both kinds is not necessary; and anathemas were added against all who should hold a contrary opinion.

The twenty-second session laid down the doctrine of the mass, declaring that Christ, "because his sacrifice was not to end with his death, in order that he might leave to his church such a visible sacrifice as the nature of man requires, . . . gave himself to be sacrificed in the church by priests under visible signs; and that this sacrifice is truly propitiatory." Anathemas were also promulgated against all who should maintain, that the sacrifice of the mass is "only one of praise and thanksgiving, and not propitiatory;" or that it is "profitable only to him that receives it, and ought not to be offered for the living and the dead;" or who should deny that in the words, *Do this in remembrance of me*, Jesus Christ did ordain the apostles priests, and command that they and other priests should offer his body and blood!

The subject of the next session was the sacrament of orders, with the different ranks of ministers, and their respective powers. The great point of debate still was, whether the bishops derived their powers from divine institution or only from the pope. Lainès,

general of the order of Jesuits, maintained that jurisdiction in the church belonged solely and exclusively to the bishop of Rome; and that Peter alone was ordained by Christ, and all the other apostles by him—or, if by Christ himself, yet by him only as “doing, for that one time, what belonged to Peter,” and what for all future time he himself had exclusively committed to him. All authority, he insisted, is derived from the pope, and he is himself above that which is derived from him. “He giveth,” Lainès proceeded, “all their force to the decrees of a council; and that to which he thus giveth force, and that only, is decreed by the Holy Ghost.” He asserted further, “that the pope had power to dispense all laws of what kind soever—the tribunal of the principal and that of the vicegerent being the same:” and that “to teach men to prefer their own conscience before the authority of the church, is to plunge them in a bottomless pit of dangers.”

The council was from time to time harassed by fierce contentions, between different parties, concerning the right of precedence. At the present period such a dispute arose between the French and Spanish ambassadors, in consequence of a device to which the pope had had recourse for putting them on a par at the celebration of mass, when he could not decide between them their claims of priority, as disturbed the congregation during the whole time of the service, and interrupted the solemnities in the most indecent manner: and the cardinal of Lorrain, brother to the duke of Guise, on the part of the French, protested that, if the like attempt were made again, he would himself mount the pulpit, with a crucifix in his hand, and having proclaimed, “He that desires the welfare of Christendom, let him follow me!” would quit the church, hoping to be followed by every one present.—Nay, the French were prepared on this occasion to protest against

Pius IV, as not rightful pope, and against the decrees which had passed, "as made at Rome, and not at Trent, and as being the decrees of Pius, and not of the council."

At length, in the twenty-third session, the decrees and canons concerning orders were published. The question of the divine or the derived right of bishops was evaded: and, on the other disputed subject of residence, the council, after ten months' deliberation and debate, and after sending various embassies and despatches to the pope and all the leading princes of Europe, came to the momentous decision, "That not to reside is sinful, where there is not a lawful cause to the contrary!"

The subject of the twenty-fourth session was marriage, which was declared to be "a true and proper sacrament;" and that "churchmen in holy orders, or regulars who have professed chastity," may not contract marriage, and that, if they do, their marriage is void. Anathemas were pronounced against such as should deny these positions. F. Paul's statement of the policy of prohibiting marriage to the clergy is clear and good. "It is plain," he says, "that married priests will turn their affections and love to their wives and children, and by consequence to their house and country: so that the strict dependence of the clergy on the apostolic see would cease. Thus granting marriage to priests would destroy the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and leave the pope bishop of Rome only."

The twenty-fifth session had been fixed for the 9th of December: but for some time past the leading princes of Christendom, convinced that no good was to be expected from the council, had forborne to press their several objects; allowed their prelates and divines to withdraw; and seemed intent only on bringing the assembly to an end as decently and quietly as possible. "And now," says F. Paul, "the one only aim and joint resolution was to pre-

cipitate the conclusion." The day of the session therefore was anticipated: and, on December the 3d and 4th, decrees were published on purgatory, the invocation and worship of saints, images, and relics; on indulgences, and prohibited books; as also concerning various subjects of reformation; and finally for terminating the council, and desiring the pope's confirmation of its decisions.

When these decrees had been read, cardinal Moronè, as chief president, granted to every one that was present in the session, or had assisted in the council, a plenary indulgence; blessed the council, and dismissed it; saying, that, after they had given thanks to God, they might go in peace.

"It is incredible," says Pallavicini, "how much the news of the conclusion of the council revived the pope in the sickness," under which he at this time laboured, and from apprehension of the consequences of which the fathers had been more anxious to bring their deliberations to a close: "so that his holiness would not have been without an illness which," by expediting this happy event, "had been so useful to the church....He therefore ordered a solemn procession to be made the next day to give thanks to God, and granted indulgences to all who should assist in it."

I close this account with an extract of a letter written by Dudithius bishop of Tinia, or Knin, in Croatia, and afterwards of Five-Churches, in Hungary, to the emperor Maximilian II. Dudithius is styled by Du Pin, "one of the most learned and eloquent men of the age." He was sent, with another prelate, to represent the clergy of Hungary in the council; where his boldness and eloquence made him so much feared by the legates, that they successfully urged on the pope the necessity of procuring his recall.

"What good," he says, "could be done in a

council in which the votes were not weighed but numbered....We daily saw hungry and needy bishops come to Trent, for the most parts youths which did not begin to have beards, abandoned to luxury and riot, hired only to give their votes as the pope pleased. They were without learning or understanding, yet fit for the purpose, through their boldness and impudence....There was a grave and learned man who was not able to endure so great an indignity. He was presently traduced as being no good catholic, and was terrified, threatened, and persecuted, that he might approve things against his will. In fine, matters were brought to that pass, by the iniquity of those who came thither formed and trained for their work, that the council seemed to consist not of bishops, but of disguised maskers; not of men, but of images, such as Dædalus made that moved by nerves which were none of their own. They were hireling bishops, who, as country bagpipes, could not speak but as breath was put into them. The Holy Ghost had nothing to do in this assembly."

THE END.

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Author Scott, John.

Vol. 2.

Reformation.

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